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MOUNTAIN TOWN IN FRANCE

Written and Illustrated
by
Robert Louis Stevenson

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Studio
Special Winter-Number
1896-7
New York

MONTMARTRE TOWN IN FRANCE

Written and Illustrated
by
Robert Louis Stevenson

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New York

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THE STUDIO

SPECIAL WINTER-NUMBER 1896-7

A MOUNTAIN TOWN IN FRANCE. BY ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.*

[We are indebted to the representatives of the late Robert Louis Stevenson for permission to print the following account of his stay at Le Monastier in the autumn of 1878. It was intended to serve as the opening chapter of his well-known volume, *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes;* but the intention was abandoned in favour of a more abrupt beginning, and the fragment is now printed for the first time. We are further allowed to illustrate it by reproductions of some leaves from a sketch-book which (as mentioned in the text) the author kept at the same time. He had, of course, no pretension to be a trained draughtsman, but was accustomed to amuse himself in black and white, both with the pencil and occasionally with the wood-block and knife. A few collectors are familiar with the little tracts to which he supplied humorous cuts and verses in a style of the utmost *naïveté*, to be printed by his young stepson, Lloyd Osbourne, during the winters the family spent at Davos (1880–81 and 1881–82). By permission of the executors we are able to subjoin reproductions of a few of these curiosities also. Mr. Joseph Pennell has been good enough to furnish a note on the quality, as it strikes him, both of the Davos cuts and the Monastier sketches.]

Le Monastier is the chief place of a hilly canton in Haute Loire, the ancient Velay. As the name betokens, the town is of monastic origin; and it still contains a towered bulk of monastery and a church of some architectural pretensions, the seat of an arch-priest and several vicars. It stands on the side of a hill above the river Gazeille, about fifteen miles from Le Puy, up a steep road where the wolves sometimes pursue the diligence in winter. The road, which is bound for Vivarais, passes through the town from end to end in a single narrow street; there you may see the fountain where women fill their pitchers; there also some old houses with carved doors and pediments and ornamental work in iron. For Monastier, like Maybole in Ayrshire, was a sort of country capital, where the local aristocracy had their town mansions for the winter; and there is a certain baron still alive and, I am told, extremely penitent, who found means to ruin himself by high living in this village on the hills. He certainly has claims to be considered the most remarkable spendthrift on record. How he set about it, in a place where there are no luxuries for sale and where the board at the best inn comes to little more than a shilling a day, is a problem for the wise. His son, ruined as the family was, went as far as Paris to sow his wild oats; and so the cases of father and son mark an epoch in the history of centralisation in France. Not until the latter had got into the train, was the work of Richelieu complete.

It is a people of lace-makers. The women sit in the streets by groups of five or six; and the noise of the bobbins is audible from one group to another. Now and then you will hear one woman clattering off prayers for the edification of the others at their work. They wear gaudy shawls, white caps with a gay ribbon about the head, and sometimes a black felt brigand hat above the cap; and so they give the street colour and brightness and a foreign air. A while ago, when England largely supplied herself from this district with the lace called *torchon*, it was not unusual to earn five francs a day; and five francs in Monastier is worth a pound in London. Now, from a change in the market, it takes a clever and industrious workwoman to earn from three to four in the week, or less than an eighth of what she made easily a few years ago. The tide of prosperity came and went, as with our northern pitmen, and left nobody the richer. The women bravely squandered their gains, kept the men in idleness, and gave themselves up, as I was told, to sweethearting and a merry life. From week's end to week's end it was one continuous gala in Monastier; people spent the day in the wine shops, and the drum or the bagpipes led on the *bourrées* up to ten at night. Now these dancing days are over. "*Il n'y a plus de jeunesse*," said Victor the garçon. I hear of no great advance in what are thought the essentials of morality; but the *bourrée*, with its rambling, sweet, interminable music, and alert and rustic figures, has fallen into disuse, and is mostly remembered as a custom of the past. Only on the occasion of the fair shall you hear a drum

* Copyright U.S.A. 1896 by John Lane.

discreetly rattling in a wineshop or perhaps one of the company singing the measure while the others dance. I am sorry at the change, and marvel once more at the complicated scheme of things upon this earth, and how a turn of fashion in England can silence so much mountain merriment in France. The lace-makers themselves have not entirely forgiven our countrywomen; and I think they take a special pleasure in the legend of the northern quarter of the town, called L'Anglade, because there the English free lances were arrested and driven back by the potency of a little Virgin Mary on the wall.

From time to time a market is held, and the town has a season of revival; cattle and pigs are stabled in the streets; and pickpockets have been known to come all the way from Lyons for the occasion. Every Sunday the country folk throng in with daylight to buy apples, to attend mass and to visit one of the wineshops, of which there are no fewer than fifty in this little town. Sunday wear for the men is a green tail coat of some coarse sort of drugget, and usually a complete suit to match. I have never set eyes on such degrading raiment. Here it clings, there bulges; and the human body, with its agreeable and lively lines, is turned into a mockery and laughing-stock. Another piece of Sunday business with the peasants is to take their ailments to the chemist for advice. It is as much a matter for Sunday as church-going. I have seen a woman who had been unable to speak since the Monday before, wheezing, catching her breath, endlessly and painfully coughing; and yet she had waited upwards of a hundred hours before coming to seek help, and had the week been twice as long, she would have waited still. There was a canonical day for consultation; such was the ancestral habit, to which a respectable lady must study to conform.

Two conveyances go daily to Le Puy, but they rival each other in polite concessions rather than in speed. Each will wait an hour or two hours cheerfully while an old lady does her marketing or a gentleman finishes the papers in a café. The *Courier* (such is the name of one) should leave Le Puy by two in the afternoon on the return voyage, and arrive at Monastier in good time for a six o'clock dinner. But the driver dares not disoblige his customers. He will postpone his departure again and again, hour after hour; and I have known the sun to go down on his delay. These purely personal favours, this consideration of men's fancies, rather than the hands of a mechanical clock, as marking the advance of the abstraction, time, makes a more humorous business of stage coaching than we are used to see it.

As far as the eye can reach, one swelling line of hill-top rises and falls behind another; and if you climb an eminence, it is only to see new and further ranges behind these. Many little rivers run from all sides in cliffy valleys; and one of them, a few miles from Monastier, bears the great name of Loire. The mean level of the country is a little more than three thousand feet above the sea, which makes the atmosphere proportionably brisk and wholesome. There is little timber except pines, and the greater part of the country lies in moorland pasture. The country is wild and tumbled rather than commanding; an upland rather than a mountain district; and the most striking as well as the most agreeable scenery lies low beside the rivers. There, indeed, you will find many corners that take the fancy; such as made the English noble choose his grave by a Swiss streamlet, where nature is at her freshest and looks as young as on the seventh morning. Such a place is the course of the Gazeille, where it waters the common of Monastier and thence downward till it joins the Loire; a place to hear birds singing; a place for lovers to frequent. The name of the river was perhaps suggested by the sound of its passage over the stones; for it is a great warbler, and at night, after I was in bed in Monastier, I could hear it go singing down the valley till I fell asleep.

On the whole, this is a Scottish landscape, although not so noble as the best in Scotland; and by an odd coincidence, the population is, in its way, as Scottish as the country. They have abrupt, uncouth, Fifeshire manners, and accost you, as if you were trespassing, with an "*Où st-ce que vous allez?*" only translatable into the lowland "Whau'r ye gaun?" They keep the Scottish Sabbath. There is no labour done on that day but to drive in and out the various pigs and sheep and cattle that make so pleasant a tinkling in the meadows. The lace-makers have disappeared from the street. Not to attend mass would involve social degradation; and you may find people reading Sunday books, in particular a sort of Catholic *Monthly Visitor* on the doings of Our Lady of Lourdes. I remember one Sunday when I was walking in the country, that I fell on a hamlet and found all the inhabitants, from the patriarch to the baby, gathered in the shadow of a gable at prayer. One strapping lass stood with her back to the wall and did the solo part, the rest chiming in devoutly. Not far off, a lad lay flat on his face asleep among some straw, to represent the wordly element.

Again, this people is eager to proselytise; and the postmaster's daughter used to argue with me by the half-hour about my heresy, until she grew quite flushed. I have heard the reverse process going on between a Scotswoman and a French girl; and the arguments in the two cases were identical. Each apostle based her claim on the superior virtue and attainments of her clergy, and clinched the business with a threat of hell fire. "*Pas bong prêtres ici*," said the Presbyterian. "*bong prêtres en Ecosse*." And the postmaster's daughter, taking up the same weapon, plied me

so to speak, with the butt of it instead of the bayonet. We are a hopeful race, it seems, and easily persuaded for our good. One cheerful circumstance I note in these guerilla missions, that each side relies on hell, and Protestant and Catholic alike address themselves to a supposed misgiving in their adversary's heart. And I call it cheerful, for faith is a more supporting quality than imagination.

Here, as in Scotland, many peasant families boast a son in holy orders. And here, also, the young men have a tendency to emigrate. It is certainly not poverty that drives them to the great cities or across the seas, for many peasant families, I was told, have a fortune of at least 40,000 francs. The lads go forth pricked with the spirit of adventure and the desire to rise in life, and leave their homespun elders grumbling and wondering over the event. Once, at a village called Laussonne, I met one of these disappointed parents: a drake who had fathered a wild swan and seen it take wing and disappear. The wild swan in question was now an apothecary in Brazil. He had flown by way of Bordeaux, and first landed in America, bare-headed and bare-foot, and with a single halfpenny in his pocket. And now he was an apothecary! Such a wonderful thing is an adventurous life! I thought he might as well have stayed at home; but you never can tell wherein a man's life consists, nor in what he sets his pleasure: one to drink, another to marry, a third to write scurrilous articles and be repeatedly caned in public, and now this fourth, perhaps, to be an apothecary in Brazil. As for his old father, he could conceive no reason for the lad's behaviour. "I had always bread for him," he said; "he ran away to annoy me. He loved to annoy me. He had no gratitude." But at heart he was swelling with pride over his travelled offspring, and he produced a letter out of his pocket where, as he said, it was rotting, a mere lump of paper rags, and waved it gloriously in the air. "This comes from America," he cried, "six thousand leagues away!" And the wine-shop audience looked upon it with a certain thrill.

I soon became a popular figure, and was known for miles in the country. *Ou'st-ce que vous allez?* was changed for me into *Quoi, vous rentrez au Monastier ce soir?* and in the town itself every urchin seemed to know my name, although no living creature could pronounce it. There was one particular group of lace-makers who brought out a chair for me whenever I went by, and detained me from my walk to gossip. They were filled with curiosity about England, its language, its religion, the dress of the women, and were never weary of seeing the Queen's head on English postage stamps or seeking for French words in English journals. The language, in particular, filled them with surprise.

"Do they speak *patois* in England?" I was once asked; and when I told them not, "ah, then French?" said they.

"No, no," I said, "not French."

"Then," they concluded, "they speak *patois*."

You must obviously either speak French or *patois*. Talk of the force of logic—here it was in all its weakness. I gave up the point, but proceeding to give illustrations of my native jargon, I was met with a new mortification. Of all patois they declared that mine was the most preposterous, and the most jocose in sound. At each new word there was a new explosion of laughter, and some of the younger ones were glad to rise from their chairs and stamp about the street in ecstasy; and I looked on upon their mirth in a faint and slightly disagreeable bewilderment. "Bread," which sounds a commonplace, plain-sailing monosyllable in England, was the word that most delighted these good ladies of Monastier; it seemed to them frolicsome and racy, like a page of Pickwick; and they all got it carefully by heart, as a stand-by, I presume, for winter evenings. I have tried it since then with every sort of accent and inflection, but I seem to lack the sense of humour.

They were of all ages: children at their first web of lace, a stripling girl with a bashful but encouraging play of eyes, solid married women, and grandmothers, some on the top of their age and some falling towards decrepitude. One and all were pleasant and natural, ready to laugh and ready with a certain quiet solemnity when that was called for by the subject of our talk. Life, since the fall in wages, had begun to appear to them with a more serious air. The stripling girl would sometimes laugh at me in a provocative and not unadmiring manner, if I judge aright; and one of the grandmothers, who was my great friend of the party, gave me many a sharp word of judgment on my sketches, my heresy, or even my arguments, and gave them with a wry mouth and a humorous twinkle in her eye that were eminently Scottish. But the rest used me with a certain reverence, as something come from afar and not entirely human. Nothing would put them at their ease but the irresistible gaiety of my native tongue. Between the old lady and myself I think there was a real attachment. She was never weary of sitting to me for her portrait, in her best cap and brigand hat, and with all her wrinkles tidily composed, and though she never failed to repudiate the result, she would always insist upon another trial. It was as good as a play to see her sitting in judgment over the last. "No, no," she would say, "that is not it. I am old to be sure, but I am better looking than that. We must try again." When I was about to leave she bade me good-bye for this life in a somewhat touching manner. We should not meet again, she said; it was a long farewell, and she was sorry. But life is so full of crooks, old lady, that who knows? I have said good-bye to people

for greater distances and times, and, please God, I mean to see them yet again.

One thing was notable about these women, from the youngest to the oldest, and with hardly an exception. In spite of their piety, they could twang off an oath with Sir Toby Belch in person. There was nothing so high or so low, in heaven or earth or in the human body, but a woman of this neighbourhood would whip out the name of it, fair and square, by way of conversational adornment. My landlady, who was pretty and young, dressed like a lady and avoided *patois* like a weakness, commonly addressed her child in the language of a drunken bully. And of all the swearers that I ever heard, commend me to an old lady in Gondet, a village of the Loire. I was making a sketch, and her curse was not yet ended when I had finished it and took my departure. It is true she had a right to be angry; for here was her son, a hulking fellow, visibly the worse for drink before the day was well begun. But it was strange to hear her unwearying flow of oaths and obscenities, endless like a river, and now and then rising to a passionate shrillness, in the clear and silent air of the morning. In city slums, the thing might have passed unnoticed; but in a country valley, and from a plain and honest countrywoman, this beastliness of speech surprised the ear.

The *Conductor*, as he is called, of *Roads and Bridges*, was my principal companion. He was generally intelligent, and could have spoken more or less falsetto on any of the trite topics; but it was his specialty to have a generous taste in eating. This was what was most indigenous in the man; it was here he was an artist; and I found in his company what I had long suspected, that enthusiasm and special knowledge are the great social qualities, and what they are about, whether white sauce or Shakespeare's plays, an altogether secondary question.

I used to accompany the *Conductor* on his professional rounds, and grew to believe myself an expert in the business. I thought I could make an entry in a stonebreaker's time-book, or order manure off the wayside with any living engineer in France. Gondet was one of the places we visited together; and Laussonne, where I met the apothecary's father, was another. There, at Laussonne, Georges Sand spent a day while she was gathering materials for the "Marquis de Villemer;" and I have spoken with an old man, who was then a child running about the inn kitchen, and who still remembers her with a sort of reverence. It appears that he spoke French imperfectly; for this reason Georges Sand chose him for companion, and whenever he let slip a broad and picturesque phrase in *patois*, she would make him repeat it again and again till it was graven in her memory. The word for a frog particularly pleased her fancy; and it would be curious to know if she afterwards employed it in her works. The peasants, who knew nothing of letters and had never so much as heard of local colour, could not explain her chattering with this backward child; and to them she seemed a very homely lady and far from beautiful: the most famous man-killer of the age appealed so little to Velaisian swine-herds!

On my first engineering excursion, which lay up by Crouzials towards Mount Mezenc and the borders of Ardèche, I began an improving acquaintance with the foreman road-mender. He was in great glee at having me with him, passed me off among his subalterns as the supervising engineer, and insisted on what he called "the gallantry" of paying for my breakfast in a roadside wineshop. On the whole, he was a man of great weather-wisdom, some spirits and a social temper. But I am afraid he was superstitious. When he was nine years old, he had seen one night a company of *bourgeois et dames qui faisaient la manège avec des chaises*, and concluded that he was in the presence of a witches' Sabbath. I suppose, but venture with timidity on the suggestion, that this may have been a romantic and nocturnal picnic party. Again, coming from Pradelles with his brother, they saw a great empty cart, drawn by six enormous horses before them on the road. The driver cried aloud and filled the mountains with the cracking of his whip. He never seemed to go faster than a walk, yet it was impossible to overtake him; and at length, at the corner of a hill, the whole equipage disappeared bodily into the night. At the time, people said it was the devil *qui s'amusait à faire ça*.

I suggested there was nothing more likely, as he must have some amusement.

The foreman said it was odd, but there was less of that sort of thing than formerly. "*C'est difficile*," he added, "*à expliquer*."

When we were well up on the moors and the *Conductor* was trying some road metal with the gauge—

"Hark!" said the foreman, "do you hear nothing?"

We listened, and the wind, which was blowing chilly out of the east, brought a faint, tangled jangling to our ears.

"It is the flocks of Vivarais," said he.

For every summer, the flocks out of all Ardèche are brought up to pasture on these grassy plateaux.

Here and there a little private flock was being tended by a girl, one spinning with a distaff, another seated on a wall and intently making lace. This last, when we addressed her, leaped up in a panic and put out her arms, like a person swimming, to keep us at a distance, and it was some seconds before we could persuade her of the honesty of our intentions.

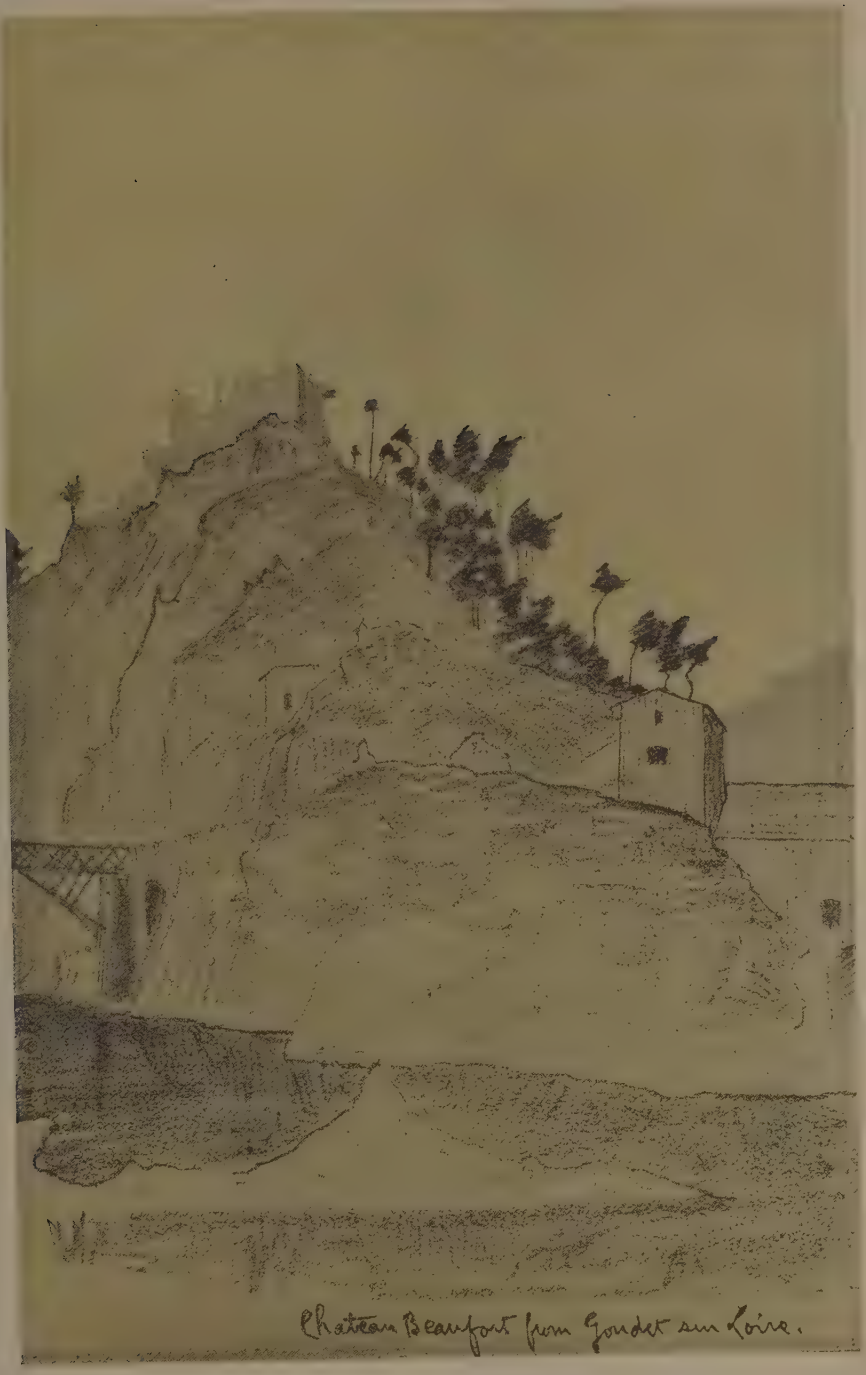
The *Conductor* told me of another herdswoman from whom he had once asked his road while he was yet new to the country, and who fled from

SOME LEAD-PENCIL DRAWINGS MADE IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF MONASTIER, FRANCE

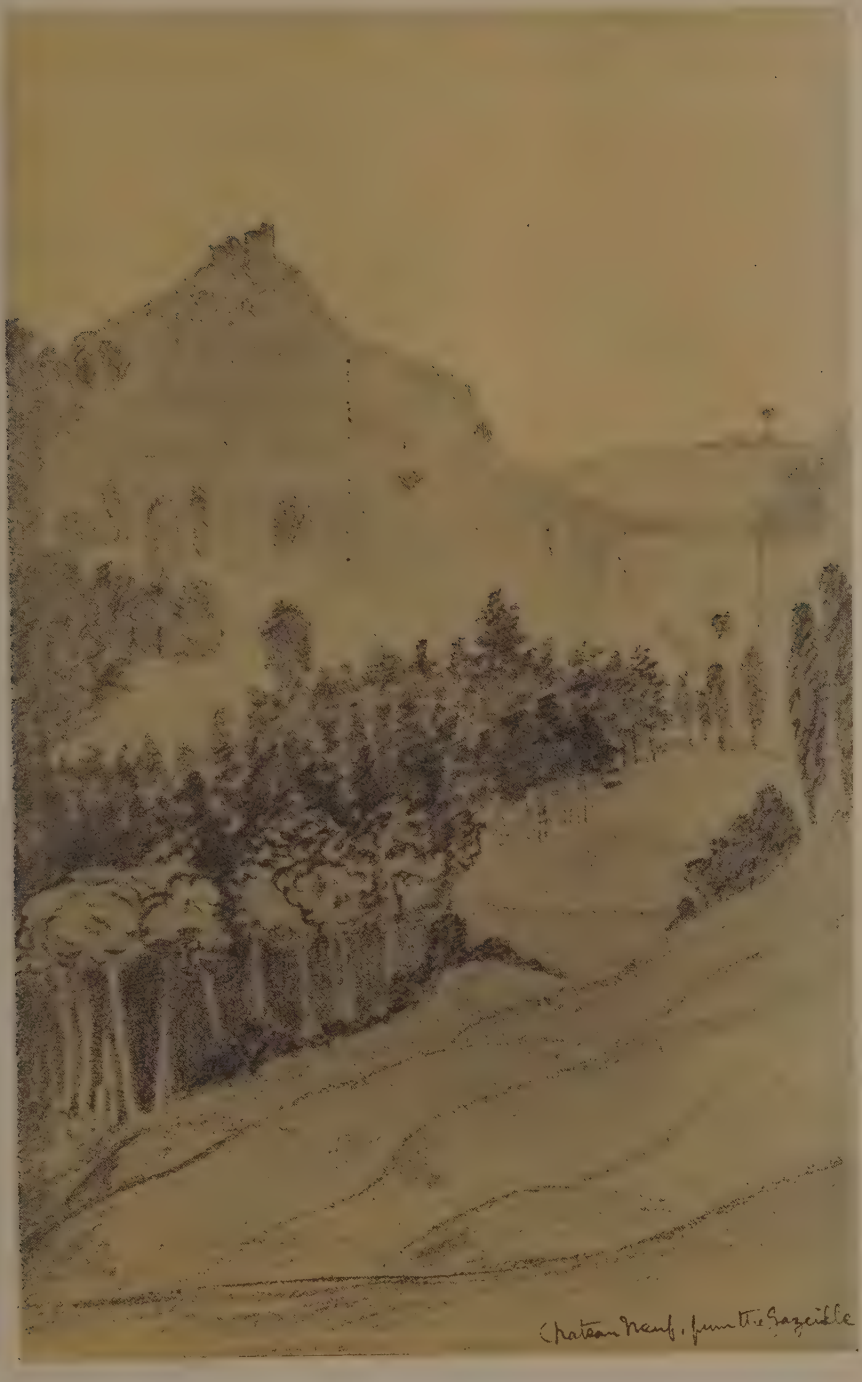
BY ROBT. LOUIS STEVENSON

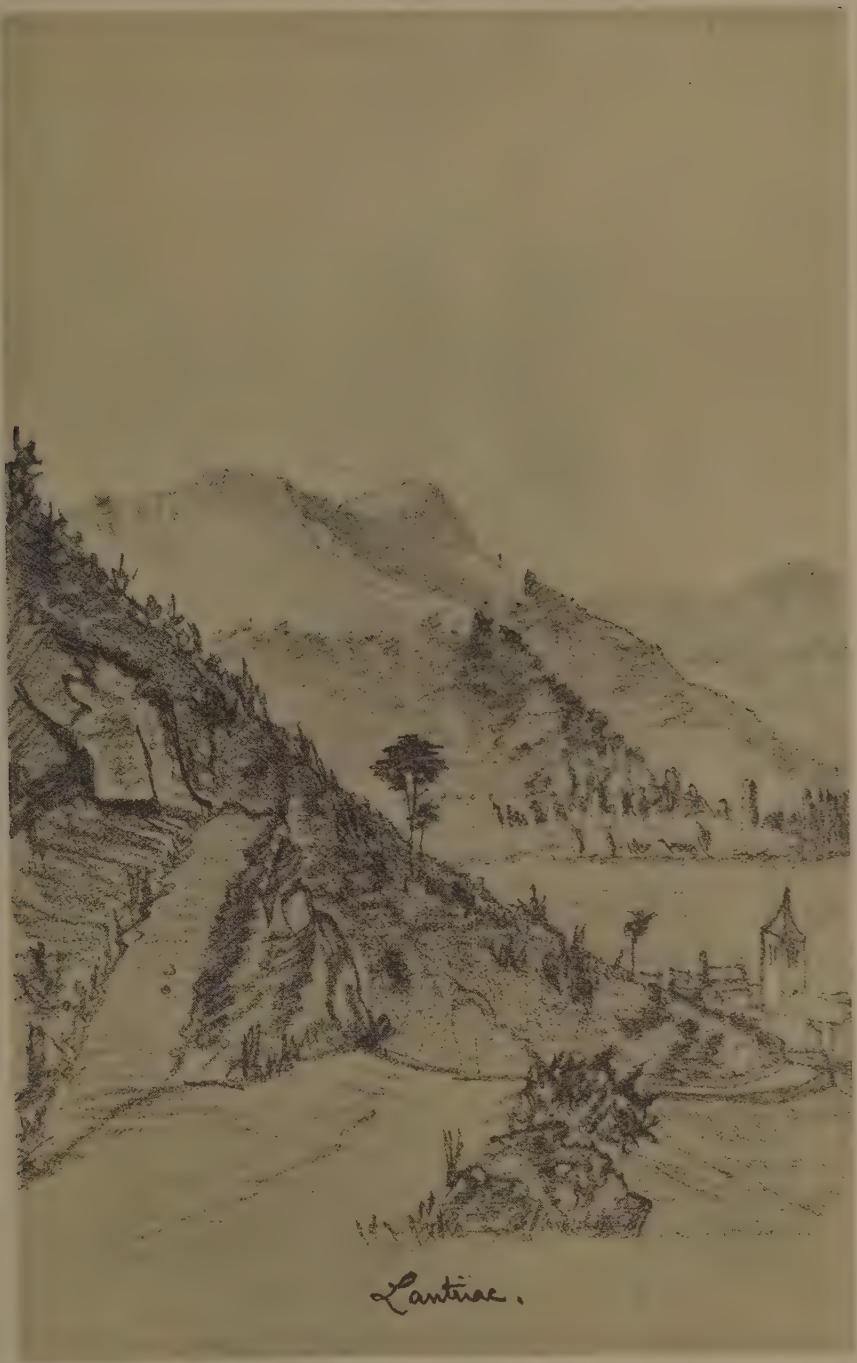
REPRODUCED
IN THE SAME
SIZE AS THE
ORIGINALS

Journey from Morris's at
L. Mountains



Château Beaufort from Gondet sur Loire.


Château Neuf, from the Gazeille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him, driving her beasts before her, until he had given up the information in despair. A tale of old lawlessness may yet be read in these uncouth timidities.

The winter in these uplands is a dangerous and melancholy time. Houses are snowed up, and wayfarers lost in a flurry within hail of their own fireside. No man ventures abroad without meat and a bottle of wine, which he replenishes at every wineshop; and even thus equipped he takes the road with terror. All day the family sits about the fire in a foul and airless hovel, and equally without work or diversion. The father may carve a rude piece of furniture, but that is all that will be done until the spring sets in again, and along with it the labours of the field. It is not for nothing that you find a clock in the meanest of these mountain habitations. A clock and an almanac, you would fancy, were indispensable in such a life. . . . .

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON, ILLUSTRATOR.* BY JOSEPH PENNELL.

It is strange to find that, after an author has been studied, written about, labelled, pigeon-holed as thoroughly as Robert Louis Stevenson, there is actually a whole phase of his life and, what is more important, of his work, which is hardly known. No doubt it will be considered impudent by many, and curious by more, that I should be the person to make this statement, or even to discuss Robert Louis Stevenson at all. Were I to speak of his literary style and his methods this would be more, or really rather less, justified. But I have no intention of doing so, though I have yet to hear of the writer who refrained from discussing the artist, though he expose his own ignorance with every word. However, I do not propose to speak of Stevenson the author, but rather of Stevenson the illustrator, a *rôle* in which I venture to think he is less famous. It has so happened that for some years I have been aware of the existence of a whole series of little books, written in verse, which are virtually unknown save to his friends, which are so rare that even the British Museum has been unable to obtain a complete set, which he illustrated himself, and which, finally, I have been asked to write about. These books have lately been placed in my hands, as well as an unpublished chapter from *In the Cevennes with a Donkey*, a chapter that in a way is closely connected with them, as I shall try to show.

There have been in the past authors who wished to be illustrators. There was Thackeray, for example, and Victor Hugo and Rossetti; the first a very commonplace draughtsman, who imagined that he was very distinguished; the second a distinguished draughtsman who never bothered, save for his own pleasure, about this form of expression; and the third, both a great writer and a great illustrator. To-day, as must be well known, there are authors who are illustrators and illustrators who are authors. Thackeray, like most authors who cannot draw but think they can, took himself seriously as an artist. But this is a crime of which Stevenson could not have been guilty. Thackeray, in the end, despite his own ambition, was well illustrated by Fred Walker. But, though we have now a magnificent edition of Stevenson—that is, magnificent so far as type and paper and binding go—he still remains, curiously enough, his own most amusing illustrator. No modern author probably gives so fine an opportunity for striking illustration, and yet none, it seems to me, has been so neglected in this respect. Mr. Walter Crane designed frontispieces for *In the Cevennes* and *An Inland Voyage*. Mr. William Hole has produced many drawings and etchings for different Stevenson books. But far the most sympathetic illustra-

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Wood engraving, designed and executed by Mr. & Mrs. Stevenson and printed under the PERSONAL supervision of Mr. Osbourne, now form a branch of their business.

FACSIMILE OF ADVERTISEMENT PAGE OF "MORAL EMBLEMS"

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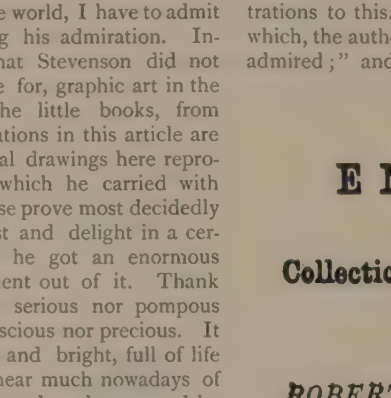
tions to Stevenson, from my point of view, were made by Mr. Metcalf for *The Wrecker*, while others were done by Mr. Hartrick for *The Body Snatcher*, and Mr. A. W. Henley for the articles on Fontainebleau. Stevenson's own preferences were for work of a very different sort, and this is all the more strange because, in his life at Barbizon and Paris, he had associated with many of the most distinguished artists of the century. Yet, I think it would be hard to find that they had had any apparent influence upon him. I remember on one occasion he published letters in praise of certain illustrations that had appeared in one of his stories, but, with the best will in the world, I have to admit myself incapable of sharing his admiration. Indeed, one might imagine that Stevenson did not understand, or possibly care for, graphic art in the least, if it were not for the little books, from which several of the illustrations in this article are taken, as well as the original drawings here reproduced from a sketch-book which he carried with him to the Cevennes. These prove most decidedly that he had a great interest and delight in a certain form of art, and that he got an enormous amount of fun and amusement out of it. Thank Heaven, for him it was not serious nor pompous nor ponderous, not self-conscious nor precious. It was like all his work, gay and bright, full of life and go, and honest. We hear much nowadays of the books designed, decorated and engraved by the same artist—perfect conditions never before realised, so we are warned, even by the more conscientious and accomplished craftsmen of the past. But, after all, though it was without vain boast or complacent pose, Stevenson and Mr. Lloyd Osbourne, in the delicious series of little books produced between them, quietly fulfilled these much vaunted conditions. Possibly they did not design the type, but then they wrote the books and printed them, which surely would more than make up for the single shortcoming. Certainly it is safe to say that one of their pages, or even the advertisement, is worth a whole library of affectation.

All of Stevenson's works are supposed to have been published in every possible form, from the penny print to the tall paper copy. But, though it may come somewhat as a surprise to collectors of Stevenson, there is a whole series of books which have been issued in but one edition, and even the British Museum has only two of them. To many it will be still more of a surprise to learn that in this set Mr. Stevenson appears as draughtsman and engraver, as well as author; and not only this, but also apparently as the designer of posters. For chief source of inspiration it seems likely that Stevenson, the illustrator, went to the beloved "Penny Plain" of his childhood. Has he not placed it on record that he was then "but a puppet in the hand of Skelt?" And it is clear that the illustrations of his later years have borrowed something from the scenery of Skeltdom. "How the roads wander, how the castle sits upon the hill, how the sun eradiates from behind the cloud, and how the congregated clouds themselves uproll as stiff as bolsters." When he wrote that might he not have been describing his own creations? though it is true that he added an unmistakable original quality to his version of the early models.

This series of books, so far as I have been able to find out, consists of the following: *Not I and other Poems*, by Robert Louis Stevenson, announced by the author, with distinguished modesty, to be a "volume of enchanting poetry;" there are no illustrations to this. *Moral Emblems*, the First Series, which, the author says, "has only to be seen to be admired;" and the Second Collection of which I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EMBLEMS
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Collection of Cuts and Verses.
By
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Author of
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Printers:
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FACSIMILE OF TITLE-PAGE OF "MORAL EMBLEMS"

own the poster reproduced on page 20. The book was published in two forms as an "*edition de luxe*, tall paper, extra fine," and to this edition I imagine my copy belongs; and in a "popular edition for the million, small paper, cuts slightly worn, a great bargain." Was there ever such an honest publisher? These were issued about 1881 from the press, not so well-known as it will be, of S. L. Osbourne & Co., Davos Platz, Switzerland, and were to be obtained from the "publishers and all respectable booksellers." Later on a third volume appeared: *The Graver and the Pen or Scenes from Nature with appropriate Verses*, illustrated by the author of *Not I, Moral Emblems, Treasure Island*, &c. The printing office had by this time been moved to Edinburgh and established at No.

Reader, your soul upraise to see,
In yon fair cut designed by me,
The pauper by the highwayside
Vainly soliciting from pride.
Mark how the Beau with easy air
Contemns the anxious rustic's prayer,
And casting a disdainful eye,
Goes gaily gallivanting by.
He from the poor averts his head. . . .
He will regret it when he's dead

See in the print, how moved by whim
Trumpeting Jumbo, great and grim,
Adjusts his trunk, like a cravat,
To noose that individual's hat.
The sacred Ibis in the distance
Joys to observe his bold resistence.

17 Heriot Row, and the poster reproduced on page 23 announces the volume with no uncertain voice, while the title page explains, "it was only by the kindness of Mr. Crerar of Kingussie that we are able to issue this little book, having allowed us to print it with his own press when ours was broken." But either the printer or the press had been so

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much improved that the typographical results in this volume are not so astonishing or amusing. *The Blue Scalper*, by Stevenson, is also advertised, but I have never seen a copy of it. There is another volume by Mr. Osbourne, *The Black Canyon*. A copy of this, I think, is in the possession of Mr. Gosse, who, by the way, was good enough to give me the volumes which I own. There are also, belonging to Mr. C. Baxter, some prints, apparently for an unpublished work, *The Pirate and the Apothecary*, three designs—"three scenes" they are called—and an historical composition, *Lord Nelson and the Tar*, reproduced on page 22, without any superfluity of text. The books were all written by Stevenson and Lloyd Osbourne, illustrated mainly by Stevenson, and engraved, it is announced in one of them, by the whole family. There is a charming conclusiveness in Stevenson's printed descriptions of the making of the volumes which will prevent any wild discussion by future bibliographers; for example, he says in *Not I*:

> The printer and the bard
> In pressless Davos pray
> Their sixpenny reward.
>
> The pamphlet here presented
> Was planned and printed by
> A printer unindented,
> A bard whom all decry.
>
> The author and the printer,
> With various kinds of skill,
> Concocted it in Winter
> In Davos on the Hill.
>
> They burned the nightly taper,
> But now the work is ripe;
> Observe the costly paper,
> Remark the perfect type.

The work was begun in February and finished in October 1881, and, with great appropriateness, is dedicated to R. and R. Clark by S. L. Osbourne, the printer. The volume ends with an apology for

> The smallness of the page
> And of the printer.

Even Stevenson is forced to admit that accidents can happen in the best regulated amateur printing offices. But he knows how to turn them to poetic account. In *The Graver and the Pen* there is a poem called *The Foolhardy Geographer* (see illustration page 24)—the hero is shown seated with,

> The howling desert miles around,
> The tinkling brook the only sound,
> * * * * *
> On potted meats and princely wines,
> Not wisely but too well he dines.

After this he falls asleep, and soon

> Shall trumpet tidings through his nose.
> Alack, unwise, that nasal song
> Shall be the ounce's dinner-gong!

But the story told, a postscript is added:

> A blemish in the cut appears,
> Alas! it cost both blood and tears.
> The glancing graver swerved aside,
> Fast flowed the artist's vital tide!
> And now the apologetic bard
> Demands indulgence for his pard.

Talk about the use of white line. It is really

With storms a-weather, rocks a-lee,
The dancing skiff puts forth to sea.
The lone dissenter in the blast
Recoils before the sight aghast.
But she, although the heavens be black
Holds on upon the starboard tack.
For why? although today she sink
Still safe she sails in printers' ink,
And though today the seamen drown,
My cut shall hand their memory down

Industrious pirate! see him sweep
The lonely bosom of the deep,
And daily the horizon scan
From Hatteras or Matapan.
Be sure, before that pirate's old,
He will have made a pot of gold,
And will retire from all his labours
And be respected by his neighbors.
You also scan your life's horizon
For all that you can clap your eyes on.

masterly, and the blemish, but for the apology, might pass as a stroke of more than usual daring. They are but rude cuts, the serious may object. But from them, is there not to be had much of that enduring and transforming pleasure which Stevenson himself took in *Skelt's Juvenile Drama?* Study them closely and you will find they are not so rude as, at a glance, they seem. For instance, if you compare the tree in the engraving with one of the trees in the original drawings, also reproduced, you will see how closely Stevenson followed his sketches.

These original sketches are taken from a little book which he carried with him in the memorable trip *In the Cevennes with a Donkey*. It will not be forgotten that, on that tramp, when he reached the convent of our Lady of the Snows and asked for shelter, he described himself as "a literary man who drew landscapes." And he could draw landscapes. One has only to look at this sketch book or at some of the backgrounds in the little engravings to see that he was a close and intelligent observer of Nature, and that he knew how to record the results of his observations with a pencil. And more than this, he must have known what was going on in illustration about him. To turn up the illustrated magazines and books of that date is to find that there was a fashion for putting mourning borders around every drawing; and this Stevenson not only adopted, but carried to excess. However, funny as are the drawings, irresistibly funny as are the verses, primitive as is the printing, and humorous as is the incessant use of the two solitary ornaments which the firm seem to have possessed, one cannot escape from the fact that Stevenson had a wonderful, though untrained, eye for form. Every line that he puts down, that he cuts, especially, is full of meaning and of character. In the second scene from the *Pirate and the Apothecary* the sky is amazingly luminous and engraved with a skill that is astounding. The feeling of the wet stones on which the figures are standing in the *Lord Nelson* is remarkably well given. So, too, is the great stretch of sea and the bottle, or is it a buoy that is tranquilly floating on the bosom of the deep? Good also is the sky in the illustration to *The Tramps* in *The Graver and the Pen*. They are really infinitely better than most of the modern sham woodcuts that are turned out and raved over in France and England to-day. Indeed, I think I should have liked him to engrave some of my things. And at one time there seemed a chance that he might have done so. For when he returned from California and published *The Silverado Squatters*, it was arranged by the Century Company that he and I should do the Rhone river together in canoes. However, like so many of his other projects this scheme was destined never to come off. It was in a way absurd, I confess. I had never been in a canoe in my life. He had already made his Inland Voyage. But the idea was that we should start at the Rhone Glacier and go all the way to Marseilles, and as the river runs underground once or twice in the beginning of its long journey, there would probably have been no lack of adventure and danger too. Finally, when it became evident that he never could take any more trips of this sort, he wrote me a long letter giving up the scheme. Perhaps it was just as well, he said, for there could be no doubt that we should have never come out of it alive—that was perfectly certain; the only question with him was, not if we should be drowned, but where. It was long before this that the little books were printed. But it must be remembered that they were made, that they were filled with all their gaiety and fun, by a man who was even then thought to be dying.

"LORD NELSON AND THE TAR"
FROM A WOODCUT BY ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

A few years ago I rode on a bicycle over virtually the same route through the Cevennes which he had followed with his donkey. I can therefore speak with a fair amount of knowledge of the accuracy and character which he got into his sketches by the way. From the chapter which is now published for the first time, it will be seen that there must have been another sketch book full of studies of the delightful lace-workers at Le Puy and Monastier. There are some notes of heads

in the sketch book from which the landscapes are taken. But I do not imagine those are the drawings to which he refers. What astonishes me most is that a man who was such a lover of, such a believer in romance, such a teller of wonderful tales, could start from a town like Le Puy and yet barely mention it in his book, and never make a drawing of that incredibly, unbelievably most picturesque place in the world. But the fact is, this sketch book is the sketch book of a real artist, inasmuch as it contains only records of just the things, just the effects which happened to appeal to him personally, which he wanted to record; they are mainly not pictures at all—certainly they are not picturesque. The greater number are studies of trees, and of mountain sides; one, an impression of mist in a valley, is really like a Japanese drawing. That is a picture. There is no doubt that he cared about the sketches, for he tried to fix them with some sort of red fluid which in many cases has badly stained the paper. I have referred to the close resemblance between the trees and the rocks in these sketches and the landscape detail of the engravings in the little books; a resemblance that leads me to think that in the illustrations he adhered most closely to the forms in Nature which he had studied on the Cevennes journey. How right I am in my conjecture, however, it would be easy to discover from his cousin, Mr. R. A. M. Stevenson, and had it been possible at the moment of writing, I should have asked him if facts did not confirm my conclusions. Professor Colvin, however, thinks it not so much that Stevenson copied the sketches, but that this was his way of looking at Nature.

Many of Stevenson's friends have said to me that this sketch book, which is owned by his family, is but a slight affair, and that the little books are but the amusement of long Swiss winter evenings. But for all that, there are, both in the sketch book and in the printed volumes, evidence of observation which only an artist could have exercised, graver lines which only an artist could have put down. To me it has been of extreme interest to learn that Stevenson was an artist, a genuine artist in line as well as in words; and it has been interesting also to point out the existence of the little books that are still all but unknown, and have always been so scarce that I have never heard of any one able to get a complete set.

THE TRAMPS
FROM A WOODCUT BY ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

THE TRAMPS.

Now long enough has day endured,
Or King Apollo Palinured,
Seaward he steers his panting team,
And casts on earth his latest gleam.

But see! the tramps with jaded eye
Their destined provinces espy.
Long through the hills their way they took,
Long camped beside the mountain brook;
Tis over; now with rising hope
They pause upon the downward slope.

And as their aching bones they rest,
Their anxious captain scans the west

So paused Alaric on the Alps,
And ciphered up the Roman scalps.

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FACSIMILE OF POSTER FOR
"THE GRAVER AND THE PEN"

"THE PRECARIOUS MILL"
FROM "THE GRAVER AND THE PEN"

THE PRECARIOUS MILL

Alone above the stream it stands,
Above the iron hill,
The topsy-turvy, tumble-down,
Yet habitable mill.

Still as the ringing saws advance,
To slice the humming deal,
All day the pallid miller hears
The thunder of the wheel.

He hears the river plunge and roar,
As roars the angry mob;
He feels the solid building quake,
The trusty timbers throb.

All night beside the fire he cowers;
He hears the rafters jar;
O, why is he not in a proper house,
As decent people are?

The floors are all aslant, he sees,
The doors are all ajam;
And from the hook above his head
All crooked swings the ham.

"Alas," he cries, and shakes his head,
"I see by every sign,
"There soon will be the deuce to pay,
"With this estate of mine"

Facsimiles of a few of the pages will be published, I believe, in the Edinburgh Memorial Edition of Stevenson, but no reproductions could ever give any satisfactory idea of the originals. The chances are that, as is always the case when one talks about rare engravings, prints, or books, other copies will now turn up; and I think I shall not be exaggerating when I say that any one who finds that he has copies of them unexpectedly stowed away, may flatter himself that he is the possessor of some of the greatest curiosities of modern English literature.

JOSEPH PENNELL.

"THE FOOLHARDY GEOGRAPHER"
FROM "THE GRAVER AND THE PEN"

(*See page* 20).

SOME FRENCH ARTISTS AT HOME. BY GABRIEL MOUREY.

THE curiosity shown by the public in regard to artists generally, whether painters or men of letters, sculptors or poets, musicians or actors, has often been condemned by censorious minds: and that condemnation is at once just and unjust. An exaggerated interest in such matters is indeed dangerous, stripping as it does in a measure that element of mystery from off the artist, which more often than not constitutes his principal charm; and in familiarising all and sundry with his private life it adds fresh force to the famous saying, "No man is a hero to his valet."

On the other hand, a wholesome curiosity, within due limits, may be a good and healthy thing, in enabling people to get a truer and deeper understanding of this or that artistic personality, and in rendering his work more clear and more comprehensible. It is, therefore, the duty of those who undertake to satisfy public curiosity in these matters, to do it with tact and delicacy, laying stress only upon that which is really characteristic of the person in question, and calculated to increase one's knowledge and appreciation of himself and his work. Many an artist who, from the lofty nature of his work, might have remained quite unknown to the majority, owes it to the judicious commentator that he has been understood and admired.

For, despite all assertions to the contrary, there exists undoubtedly an exact co-relation between

PUVIS DE CHAVANNES IN HIS STUDIO

the Man and the Artist; and this principle of the subjectivity of the plastic arts is showing itself more than ever to-day, in this individualist age of ours. "Every painter paints himself," remarked Savonarola; and all contemporary work emphasises the truth of the saying.

Thus, I have tried to present very simply—as an addition to the photographic "documents," showing the exact personality of some of our French painters, and the actual aspect of their studios—certain of the predominating characteristics both of the men themselves and of their productions. I have intentionally ignored the purely technical side of the question, and have confined myself exclusively to the attempt to produce from out of each artist's work a sort of psychological diagnosis. Beyond this my remarks have no pretensions whatever.

M. Puvis de Chavannes.

The very heart of Montmartre, No. 11 Place Pigalle, has been for more than thirty years the home of the painter of the *Bois Sacré*. Besides his large studio, he has two apartments, a bed-room and a dressing-room; nothing more. And in this sumptuous home lives the magical inspirer of the loveliest of dreams, the noblest of thoughts! On the walls, drawings and sketches and photographs of his works; and for furniture, simply a big table, a few arm-chairs and a sofa. But the presence of the artist himself gives an air of nobility to the place, and one crosses the threshold with reverence.

Here it is he receives his friends every morning before nine o'clock. He will open the door himself, robed in a long brown dressing-gown like a monk's garment; and as he dresses, he will talk, and talk, of art or literature, or the latest news, anything in fact, and always with rare depth of thought and the most charming *bonhomie*. Never a spiteful word about any man, or any man's work, for he is full of kindliness and indulgence towards every artistic effort. Truly there is in this great man an extraordinary simplicity of feeling and a most lively freshness of impressions. Unceasingly absorbed in his own placid imaginings, he has been kept aloof from the ugly side of life. And yet he had to struggle hardest of them all before his triumph came.

His old friend, Marcellin Desboutin, the painter-engraver, pays him a visit every morning—a quaint figure, pipe in mouth, with a Florentine cap stuck anyway on his long grey curls, and in winter time

CAROLUS DURAN IN HIS STUDIO

muffled up in a well-worn cloth cape! It is quite touching to see the respect he shows for his great friend, Puvis, and to hear the friendly, cordial veneration of his tone when he calls him "master." The art-world manners of a bygone day live again in the frank and loyal friendship of these two men.

Puvis de Chavannes works but little in his Place Pigalle home. His real working studio is at Neuilly, outside the fortifications; a vast, bare room, with plenty of space for his enormous canvases. He goes there every morning at nine o'clock, and remains till the evening, working alone all day on the ladder, without the assistance of pupils. The only break in his work is a light meal at mid-day.

A life of incessant labour, a noble and dignified life of indefatigable productiveness! And yet he is ever ready to help the younger generation with his advice, always prompt to help both morally and materially any one who may knock at his door. As president of the National Society of Fine Arts, elected by acclamation on the death of Meissonier, he carries out his delicate duties with exemplary fairness, and in a large-minded spirit of simplicity and kindness. Few men there are—and one can say it without fear of contradiction who could have inspired the intense admiration and the equally intense affection universally bestowed upon him, and few who so fully deserve it.

M. Carolus Duran.

As his Christian name would seem to suggest, M. Carolus Duran has always been devoted to pomp and pageantry. He would have delighted to live in an age when kings picked up their painters' brushes, when artists were sent as ambassadors to neighbouring States. Thus he is an ardent admirer of Velasquez and of Rubens, as much for the sumptuous life they led as for the works they created. One must hear him pronounce the name Velasquez in the true Spanish manner to have a real idea of the veneration he feels for that incomparable master!

This love of his for all that is rich and luxurious is seen very forcibly in the wealth of stuffs and silks, brocades and plushes, laces and jewels with which he adorns his women's portraits. It obviously follows that the natural, *bourgeois* faces of the present day have no attraction for him, and the result is that they appear in his pictures flat and feeble and uninteresting. Moreover, in many of the canvases bearing his signature, M. Carolus Duran has not condescended to make the features of his models his chief concern, but has preferred

HENRI GERVEX IN HIS STUDIO

to bestow the best part of his care on the decorative setting and the still-life accessories.

He has been very successful. For years he was the spoilt darling of the public, or, to be more correct, *one* of its spoilt darlings; for the public has had many in the past five-and-twenty years. But it must not be imagined he is this no longer; for undoubtedly he is. Fine swordsman, good horseman, excellent judge of knick-knacks, keenest of musical critics, deft wielder of the brush, marvellous guitariste, he has not unnaturally been idolised. For it is impossible to deny the fascination, both mental and personal, of this refined and accomplished scholar, who has read everything, seen everything, heard everything worth reading and seeing and hearing.

He is the survivor of a generation of painters fast passing away, a generation with an all-too-superficial conception of the artist's life. Yet, although his style may appear to some rather loud, he has unquestionably done fine and powerful work, as, for instance, his portrait of Raoul Pascalis, known as *Le Poète à la Mandoline.*

Of middle size, with crisp white hair and beard —but yesterday quite black—keen of glance and dressed to perfection. Was born at Lille, in Watteau's country. Wears a bracelet.

M. Henri Gervex.

A true Parisian, delicate and refined, full of sparkle and "go" in his talk as in his painting. A live man, and fond of life in all its aspects.

He is essentially the woman painter. Apart from his large picture, *Le Jury du Salon de Peinture*, hanging in the Luxembourg, his chief successes have been his female portraits and scenes. He has the art of rendering, with certainty and refinement, and with not too much realism, a woman's soft skin and the supple harmony of her form. A little tricky sometimes, it may be objected. Too many lilies and roses. True enough; but there is a charm in almost all he does, a sense of fascination introduced with no little skill.

His predilection, I make bold to say, is for the eighteenth century. There it is he finds completest response to his own nature. He has the power of brush possessed by some of the masters of that period, the same charming, laughter-laden touch, the same grace, and, like them, he delights by his well-ordered sense of composition. One

P. ROLL IN HIS STUDIO

does not demand of him any deep, concrete study of reality. That is not his temperament at all; for he has too much imagination to restrain his fancy when he finds a subject lending itself to his seductive treatment.

There is also in his manner something of the licence—for want of a better word—which marked the work of the eighteenth century painters. He prefers prettiness to beauty. In Baudelaire's phrase, loveliness in his eyes is not the "*dur fléau des hommes*," but something far more approachable, far less formidable. Beauty for him consists of lips easy of reach, laughing lips, with nothing severe about them. It means all the charms of the woman of to-day, the feather-brained, heartless, soulless creature of useless, careless luxury—the Parisienne.

He is a man of the world, still young, fair, straight-featured, with pointed beard and close-cropped hair. Frank and kindly of manner, he has many friends, always delighted to hear of his successes.

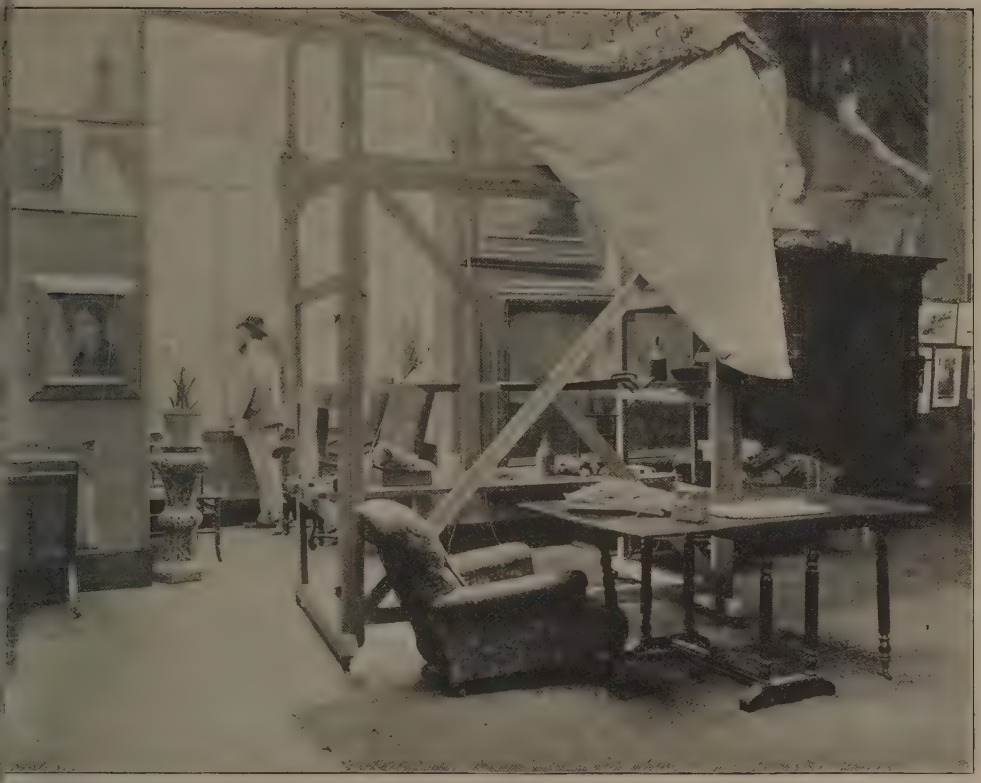
M. Roll.

Here is a healthy, vigorous artist, with the feeling of nature strong within him, enamoured of the broad expanse of light, the fertility of things, everything instinct with strength and living beauty. Closely observant, he is yet full of spirit, ignoring minute details, and seeing things in a large abundant light. He has a taste for strict sincerity of treatment, and his favourite types come from the country-side, from the workshop and the street, for he loves the instinctive movements of the crowd.

His work is full of instruction; but his portraits despite—or perhaps because of—their fulness of treatment, their masterly power in the representation of externals, somehow lack the sense of the inner life. The body, in all its beauty, is alive enough, but there is no soul. If one may so express it, the artist's very gifts are an impediment to him.

But in his nude studies, in his women stretched on the grass in the sunshine, he triumphs indeed. His *Silène*, with its group of nymphs, his *Femme au Taureau*, reveal a truly personal temperament, a view of things which may be exaggerated, but is surely quite original. The effects of light upon these naked forms are of the rarest and most felicitous audacity.

Latterly M. Roll would seem to have sobered down; or perhaps it is simply that we have grown accustomed to the vigorous caprices of his art



A. BESNARD IN HIS STUDIO

He was certainly ill at ease in dealing with enormous canvases like *Le Centenaire de* 1789 and *Les Joies de la Vie*. Here his style acquired a feebleness hitherto unknown in him, a hesitating manner quite foreign to his custom—merely a momentary weakness, let us hope.

The man himself is entirely simple and unaffected. Big and square-shouldered, with the greyish fair hair and fan-shaped beard of vigorous middle-age, his keen, intelligent glance proclaims him essentially a man, sympathetic but undemonstrative, a frank, sincere nature of solid quality. Paris is his birthplace, and his studio is in Rue Alphonse de Neuville, near the fortifications, where a warm shake of the hand awaits all his friends. He affects a high flat-brimmed hat.

M. Besnard.

Physically not at all the man one would imagine from his works. Not a trace of *nervosité*, no sign of subtlety or over-refinement in this tall, thickly-built form, in which everything proclaims the true sanguine temperament.

The truth is, this subtle, delicate artist is in reality a personality of prodigious energy and will-power. Despite all his peculiarities, he has the true artistic saneness ever combatting his strange ideas, never weary, but ever ready to renew the struggle. The irresistible attraction of his work lies in this unceasing pursuit of higher things. And how curious have been some of the points in his career. With his passion for colour, he has tried to render with his brush all the mysteries of light, attempting effects which no one, it may safely be said, had attempted before him. And in his half-tints, in the whole range of twilight shades, with their subdued tones, as in the wild blaze of Oriental colouring under the blinding sun, he has always succeeded in creating new and unexpected impressions without any concession to convention, and with all the force of a confident personality which, by dint of sheer hard work, has earned the right to assert itself in opposition to all.

Besnard has indeed a complex nature, now devoted to the weird and the extravagant, losing itself at times in excess of cleverness, now bursting forth into poems of purest harmony of line and colour. What power and feeling in his frescoes in the Ecole de Pharmacie, for example, and what a marvellous comprehension of the art of mural painting! And what an exquisite sense of nature in his work at the "Art Nouveau," in which he paints the poetry

DAGNAN IN HIS STUDIO

of the glaciers, the beauty of the Alpine scenery. At the same time, in all his work, even the smallest and least pretentious, what sparkling originality, what acuteness of perception, what a marvellous faculty for transforming and transposing reality into genuine poetry!

He lives in Rue Guillaume-Tell, close by the Avenue de Villiers, in a private house built from his own designs, while in the summer he has a villa on the shores of Lac d'Annecy, whence he derives many of his most striking impressions.

An acute art-critic, when in the vein, his writings are full of force and interest.

M. Dagnan.

A minute and conscientious worker, whose genuine ability is in complete contrast to the spontaneous, happy-go-lucky efforts which in these days of hasty production so often take the place of real knowledge and talent. And M. Dagnan has other qualities. Somewhat after the fashion of the German portrait-painters of the Holbein school, he aims steadily at precision, expression, and revelation of character. The truthfulness of his work is obtained by the most elaborate care bestowed on all the details. *Dans la Forêt*, for instance, one of his finest works, shows a group of wood-cutter seated on the fallen trunks, or standing by attentively listening to one of their comrades playing th violin. The singing of the four strings seems to fi the canvas, and rise, vibrating in tones of stron emotion, through the branches overhead. An looking in the faces of the men grouped aroun one may see the effect of the music in the expre sion of each one of them; while the player stand transfigured by the emotions of the others. In hir is concentrated all their capacity for affection an love, and suffering, and generosity, and longing. H is the centre of this little universe, bounded by th tall bare trunks, which by-and-by perhaps, whe work begins anew, will fall beneath their axes.

M. Dagnan is somewhat like this violin-playe whom his masterly talent has produced. The air he plays go straight to the soul; and though h may play with varying skill, it is always with tha faculty, peculiar to himself, of evoking a whol world of impressions. A subtle, cunning psychc logist, knowing much of our poor humanity, fron having studied its secret windings with patienc and intelligence.

In his portraits one may urge against him certain hardness of treatment; but there is n

C. CAZIN IN HIS STUDIO

nying his rare talent for thoroughly understand-
g his models, or the great sincerity he puts into
s work.

With pointed chestnut beard, longish hair in
fringe on his forehead, pale face with deep-set
e shining from beneath the heavy brows, he
ars a slight resemblance to Bastien-Lepage, whose
ccessor and pupil he is in a sense—a fact which
far from lowering him in my estimation.

M. Cazin.

With his soft-featured face, full of mildness, his
oad forehead framed in a mass of long hair, his
pression ever full of reverie, M. Cazin is indeed
pical of his work, with all its poetry and delicacy.

M. Cazin has taken high rank among the great
ndscapists of the French school. There is in his
ork, apart from its purely artistic qualities, evidence
a sensibility of the finest and keenest sort. He
as no equal in his deep realisation of the divine
oetry of the night, with its moon-rise and its twi-
ght mists, which he paints with incomparable
elicacy, in all their infinite mystery and charm.

He has no fancy for giving us rich and luxuriant
ndscapes; his taste is for the humblest, simplest
enes, the barren plains and hillsides, with the mournful sea behind them; or the poor hovels amid the thistles and the withered grass; the deserted shores, with the fishermen's weather-beaten huts; the lonely roads worn by the wayfarers' tired feet; the shaky cottage walls, with lights in the window o' nights. The beauty of all this is in the atmosphere with which he clothes it. There is something very simple and very sweet about it, something which is akin to the grandeur and the purity of the landscapes of Holy Writ, the scenes of the early days of humanity. This first star of evening shining in the blue twilight, still tinged with the light of the dying day—this same star shone out in ages long gone by, shone out to light the shepherds of Mesopotamia, and cast its beams on Eliezer and Rebecca at the well.

Where is the landscapist of the present time, with its pretentions to absolute reality, to sheer naturalism, who has been able to awake within us impressions such as these? Is it not art itself, the very highest art, so to present things to our eyes that they belong not to one age, but to all the ages; to generalise them, and turn them into purest poetry? It is with intense satisfaction one recognises in M. Cazin the possessor of this rarest of gifts. He is a painter and a poet of Nature.

ARCHITECTURAL SKETCHING.

BY ARNOLD MITCHELL.

IT is a fortunate thing that what is, perhaps, the most enjoyable of all holidays, a sketching trip, is for architects almost an educational necessity. The architectural travelling studentships offered by the Royal Academy and other bodies, point to this fact, and the keenness with which they are competed for serves to show the value attached to them by those for whose benefit they were established.

It is often urged that an architect's training h a tendency to cramp and confine what there is the artist in the man; and, no doubt, there much truth in this contention, where that traini has taken place solely in the office or in t workshop. The value of out-door sketchi consists, therefore, in the correction of the pure mechanical methods of the tee-square and t drawing board in the first place; but even mo so in the inexpressible advantage not only duri student days, but throughout the whole of his arc tectural career, in enabling him to note the metho and actual work of men who have gone befor men, it may be, who had the same problems a

NORTH TRANSEPT, ROMSEY ABBEY. FROM A DRAWING IN LEAD-PENCIL BY ARNOLD MITCHELL

CANOPY TO A CHOIR STALL, BEVERLEY MINSTER. FROM A DRAWING IN LEAD-PENCIL BY ARNOLD MITCHELL

SKELTON CHURCH, YORKSHIRE
FROM A DRAWING IN LEAD-PENCIL BY ARNOLD MITCHELL

difficulties to face as are met with in the present day, and whose accumulated experience, jotted down in the pages of a sketch book, cannot fail to be of enormous advantage and assistance, not necessarily in the slavish reproduction in modern work of the precise forms and details of a bye-gone time, but in the gradual process of saturating the mind with the best examples and the best methods of the old builders. What more thorough, what more complete, education in style and in design can there be, where such a process is constantly and systematically pursued?

If architectual sketching be of so great value to the student, the question may reasonably be asked, why is it not more commonly practised? To this various answers may be given. As with all sketching, the chief difficulty consists, not in knowing how much there is to draw, as in knowing what should be omitted from the picture; in fact, the whole drawing may be described as a shorthand note of the subject.

Mr. Walter Millard (than whom there is no more qualified authority) puts the matter tersely in saying that the white paper should do the greater part of the work, and not the pencil; and those who, through following this precept, have attained a certain facility in architectural sketching will agree that no sounder advice could be given.

The process of short-handing appears then to be the important point, but it is a process that can only be acquired by a preliminary stage of hard, painstaking drawing to a large scale, and in the fullest detail. Put in another way, it is only a precise and accurate knowledge of the detail to be drawn that will enable the draughtsman to adequately represent it in a rapid sketch.

For architectural sketching, a preliminary course of large-scale sketches of the various forms and features which go to make up the design of a building seems essential, and it is for want of this preliminary work that so many otherwise clever draughtsmen fall short where architecture is to be represented. Of course, there are other considerations which must be taken into account, and not the least of these is, that without a fair knowledge of the laws of ordinary perspective, the result may be disastrous.

Perspective is important in any drawing, but it is exceptionally so in a sketch of buildings, consisting, as they do, almost entirely of straight lines; in many a general sketch this matter may be shirked or slurred over in some way or another, with architecture it is impossible to do so.

The inexperienced sketcher, too, sometimes finds considerable difficulty in the choice of

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SOUTH-WEST TOWER, LINCOLN CATHEDRAL
FROM A DRAWING IN LEAD-PENCIL BY ARNOLD MITCHELL

FROM A DRAWING IN LEAD-PENCIL BY ARNOLD MITCHELL

the pencil being a B of the best possible quality; good pencils are desirable, for in addition to the loss of time in sharpening a bad pencil, and the risk of spoiling the drawing, the loss of temper may seriously hinder good work. With the brush a most delightful opportunity is open, but with its use the temptation is almost irresistible to sacrifice the detail, which in architectural sketching cannot properly be dispensed with; it is only the experienced sketcher of buildings that can be entrusted with so dangerous, though withal so enchanting a method.

Looking at an architectural sketching trip from the holiday maker's point of view, it would be difficult to find a more delightful outing for the summer months. It is surprising how keen one grows in exploring unsubject; a case has even been known of two travelling students, arriving at Lincoln on a sketching tour, wandering through the city for a whole day in helplessness and despair at being unable to find anything they could draw; frightened probably at the grandeur and beauty of the great Cathedral; and this is no exaggerated case, but must, in a greater or less degree, have been the experience of many. A very similar occurrence took place in connection with the accompanying sketch of the Church at Skelton, a small village a few miles from York; this building was visited after fruitless attempts at a sketch in the great Minster. The wiser way, no doubt, under such circumstances, would have been to commence sketching some small feature, and then gradually let the sketch grow, including more of the building as courage was gained. Some of the finest architectural sketches ever done have grown in this way from very small beginnings.

known ground, where the solid results as set forth in the pages of one's sketch-book repay the trouble and difficulties experienced. Places of no importance which few even think of visiting, become

As to the sketching materials most suitable for architectural work, as with all drawings, this is very much the personal whim of the artist. No doubt the quickest method of work is with the pencil only, but even with the pencil great variety is possible, though upon one point all will probably be agreed—viz., that fairly smooth paper is essential.

Probably the best course to pursue is to commence with a smooth paper and a hard pencil, and to work in outline only; this ensures accuracy, and as greater facility is gained the pencil may become softer. The sketches illustrating this paper were drawn on the pages of a common cartridge paper sketch-book, size about 10 inches by 8 inches,

FROM A DRAWING IN LEAD-PENCIL BY ARNOLD MITCHELL

WIMBORNE MINSTER — FROM A DRAWING IN LEAD-PENCIL BY ARNOLD MITCHELL

interesting indeed when thus visited, and nothing helps one so much to get into touch with the people of the locality as sketching.

The stranger sketching the church is bound to be an object of interest to the inhabitants of the place, and almost invariably the act is taken as a high compliment, and is but seldom resented. It is curious how much help is spontaneously proffered to one so engaged; interesting little scraps of information about the building are given, followed perhaps by no less interesting little bits of personal history, and talk of the friendliest character, resulting it may be in substantial help in one's work in the pointing out of the best view, and the indication of features and objects that might otherwise be overlooked. Often, too, the objects best worth seeing in a place are hidden away from the stranger's view altogether; the old houses with their panelling, fireplaces, glass, and furniture; to these again and again the sketcher obtains access, simply because he is a sketcher, the owner being only too proud to exhibit his belongings where he knows they will be appreciated.

Many a point of view from which a building may best be seen, especially in old towns, is from the upper windows, or even from the roof of houses near by; and it is remarkable how readily access to such positions is gained if application be made sketch-book in hand. No trouble is too great on the part of one's temporary host to give every possible facility for work even at considerable inconvenience; and hospitality of a more solid description often follows, resulting it may be in new and delightful acquaintances.

BUSHEY MODELS. BY R. MORTON NANCE.

If he takes his walks abroad at a fairly early hour on a weekday morning, the uninitiated visitor to the village of Bushey will be somewhat surprised, on approaching the celebrated school, to find the gates of that establishment walled in by a heterogeneous crowd of villagers of all ages, sizes, and sexes, and he will instinctively nerve himself for a Punch and Judy show, a dancing bear, or a dog fight. These good people, however, are not here for diversion, but have come with a fierce resolve to be "taken on" for the day at the school, and old folks and children, "boys and girls, the vacant and the busy, maids and youths, and urchins newly breeched," elbow and jostle one another in the hope of being selected to "sit" as models for the students.

On these occasions representatives of the working population of the village are usually conspicuous by their absence, and the adult portion of the picturesque crowd consists for the most part of those who look upon field labour as savouring too much of hard work, and who prefer a life of masterly inactivity to one devoted to the

irksome, if more remunerative occupation of tilling the soil.

Under this category, however, must not be included the grandfathers of the hamlet whose mundane task is done, and who have an indisputable right to pass the evening of their days in blissful repose, and to earn a little beer and tobacco money by permitting their fine old rugged features to be transferred to paper or to canvas by young aspirants to a niche in the temple of artistic fame. Certain of our imaginative transatlantic cousins aver that there is a village in the State of Illinois which is so healthy "that people are obliged to go somewhere else to die," and although Bushey cannot perhaps claim to approach such a truly admirable standard of sanitation, the salubriousness of the locality is no doubt responsible for the large number of hoary-headed swains who appear to rival Old Parr or even Methuselah himself in ripeness of years; and these ancients are naturally much sought after as models by Professor Herkomer's pupils.

When the gates of the school are opened and a selection made from the expectant groups, the chosen ones, young and old, are marched through the cloisters to the preliminary class-room, where they ascend the throne and sit as well as the infirmities of old age or extreme youth will permit; while, flushed with enthusiasm and inexperience, the budding artist not yet admitted to the life class, tries to reproduce their charms in sooty charcoal drawings and weird experiments in oil. These charms not infrequently prove on paper to be of a nature calculated to strike dismay into the hearts of their owners—an extensive and blobby nose, a vivid shock of that shade of hair known locally as "carroty tops," and a face that exhibits planes, bones, or features in such a way as to impress their existence forcibly and indelibly upon the mind of the most careless observer, and to cause those in authority to exclaim with Wordsworth, "Avaunt! this vile abuse of pictured page."

When requisitioned for a sitting it is difficult to persuade a villager that he is not required to be "dressed all in his best," and one is often saddened by the sight of a stiff, starched, cropped and hair-oiled old swell in whom, at first sight, one fails to recognise the weather-worn, unbarbered, and consequently picturesque rustic of yesterday, who has got himself up to have his "fortygraft tooked."

In the seclusion of a private studio these old fellows often prove themselves to be decided "characters." Like most sitters, they sit with unlimited patience and heroic endurance when allowed to talk about themselves. This usually means the recitation of a catalogue of nearly all the disorders known to medical science that have occurred in divers regions of the Busheyite's anatomy, and one hears with mixed feelings of the "haricot veins" and "screwmatics" which are a source of trouble to one old gentleman whom all the lady students devoutly adore. In the talk of these old country people one often catches something suggestive of the primitive life that still lingers on in such old-fashioned places as this, despite the modernisation and "betterment" which are gradually spreading their pall over the majority of rural districts.

Children, as models, are obtainable here by the score, and scarcely one will refuse to sit, although peace has to be made with the Board school, where attendances are sometimes apt to be distressingly small. The children often begin to "sit" before they have made even elementary attempts to walk, and continue to do so until they go out to work for their daily bread. Although they are not encouraged as models for beginners, there is, nevertheless, a good demand for them in connection with work that is not purely educational, and, moreover, the rate of payment for children is only half that demanded by adult models—which is no small consideration for many an embryo academician.

In addition to the native models, tramps will sometimes be graciously pleased to rest on their way and give a sitting or two in return for a trifle. These peripatetics, of any one of whom it may be said that

> Misery and mirth are blended in his face,
> Much innate vileness and some outward grace,

are delightful subjects to work from, but, amongst a few other disadvantages, they possess that of disappearing in the middle of a sitting and turning up again perhaps some time next year. Those who favour these parts with their patronage belong chiefly to that tribe whose motto is "We've got no work to do, and we wouldn't do it if we had any"—the tribe which had a typical representative in an applicant to a contractor for a job: "I have no more vacancies," replied the employer of labour, "sufficient hands are already engaged for the work." "Well, *that* needn't stand in the way," urged the unemployed, "'cos the little I'd do wouldn't make no difference."

The artists and their ways are a continual source of wonderment to the villagers. As an explanation of the existence of the Colony, an idea prevails in the mind of one of the native wiseacres that the Bushey school is a kind of picture factory, and that during the summer months Professor Herkomer hawks the works of art produced by his students through the country in a coster-barrow, bearing such devices as "Try our Noted Portraits," "Landscapes are Cheap To-day," and so forth.

This would also satisfactorily explain to the rural mind the severe "slatings" which are popularly supposed to be meted out to the perpetrators of unsalable articles.

BUSHEY MODELS

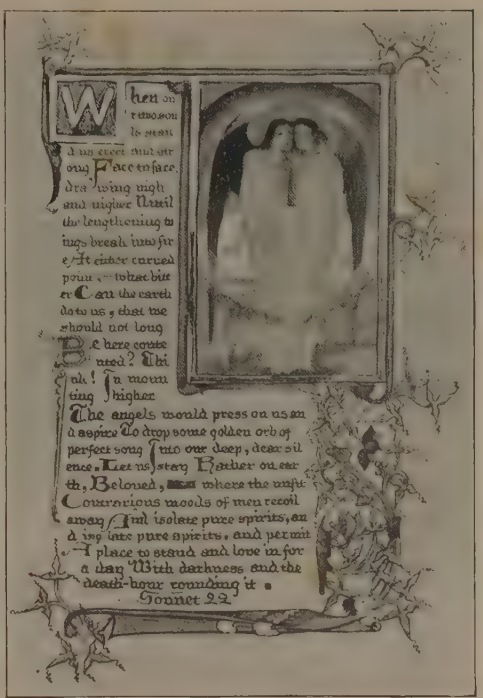
FROM DRAWINGS IN
LEAD-PENCIL BY
R. MORTON NANCE

BEAUTIFUL MODERN MANUSCRIPTS. BY MARGARET ARMOUR.

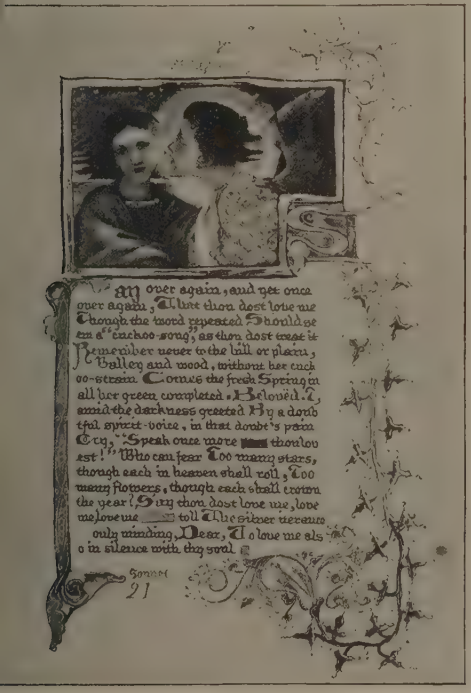
No art is of higher or more ancient lineage than Illumination, yet none is to-day more obscure. Scions of the illustrious stock are among us still, but they are so retiring in their habits, being fitted neither for gallery exhibition or multiplying processes, that, save of a few intimate eyes, they are born to blush unseen. Many quite cultured people have no idea that the mediæval MSS. they admire have had descendants born in our time, that will one day be gathered to their ancestors in the family vaults supplied by our museums. To such, the specimens of modern MSS. given here may be a pleasant surprise.

Before discussing these contemporaries, and as a help to proving their descent, let us glance for a moment at the ancients, and briefly trace the evolution of the art from its source.

Illumination, like all the fine arts, had its origin in man's instinctive expression of himself in beauty along the lines indicated by utility. When the picture-writing of the savage became abridged into hieroglyphs, and hieroglyphs into alphabetical symbols, it was an intellectual advance; but, artistically, it was a retrogression, which, from the very first, ornament and colour attempted to atone


When on
reason
to seem
Face to face
drawing nigh
and higher Until
the lengthening
breath turns
curved
point — to beat
on the earth
date to us, that we
should not long
here content?
mourning higher
The angels would press on us and aspire To drop some golden orb of
perfect song Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay Rather on earth, Beloved, where the unfit
Contrarious moods of men recoil
away And isolate pure spirits, and permit
A place to stand and love in for
a day With darkness and the
death-hour rounding it.
Sonnet 22

ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPT BY MRS. TRAQUAIR


ay over again, and yet once
over again, That thou dost love me
Though the word repeated Should seem a "cuckoo-song," as thou dost treat it
Remember never to the hill or plain,
Valley and wood, without her cuckoo-strain Comes the fresh Spring in
all her green completed. Beloved, I,
amid the darkness greeted By a doubtful spirit-voice, in that doubt's pain
Cry, "Speak once more thou lovest!" Who can fear Too many stars,
though each in heaven shall roll, Too many flowers, though each shall crown
the year? Say thou dost love me, love
me love me — toll The silver iterance
only minding, Dear, To love me also in silence with thy soul.
Sonnet 21

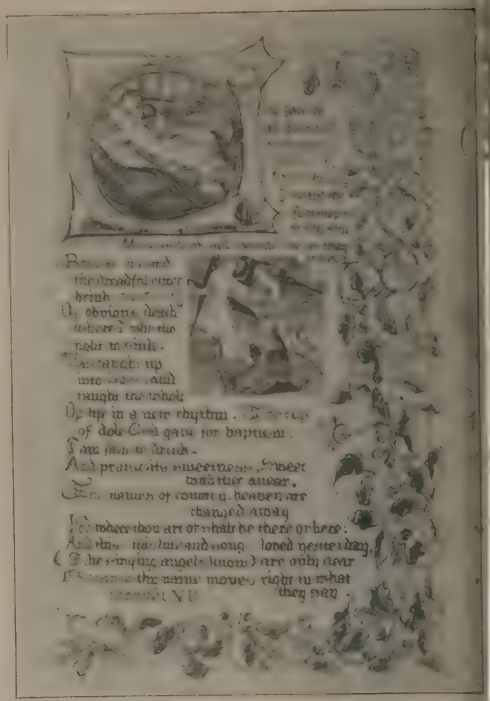
ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPT BY MRS. TRAQUAIR

for. From remote times Egypt illuminated her papyrus leaves. Among the old Romans black ink was relieved by red, to denote emphasis primarily, and, afterwards, for decorative ends. Towards the close of the second century gold and purple were enlisted, that beautiful thought might "go beautifully." Greece, where were scribes called "writers in gold," taught Rome this gorgeous style, having herself learnt it, in all probability, from Egypt. The parchment which took the gold lettering was rose- or purple-stained, and the books made of it found favour with the rich and great. The young Julius Capitolinus records the gift to him of a Homer on gold and purple vellum, from the mother of the emperor Maximus. So that, if purple and fine linen fell rarely to the lot of poets during their lives, they had at least the chance of purple and fine vellum after death—a consolation which not even our most artistic publishers hold out to them nowadays! This regal method of adornment was chiefly adopted by the Eastern Empire where, modified by Persian influence, it remained characteristic of the Byzantine School. The Western Empire stuck to its severer colour-scheme of black and red in script and miniatures.

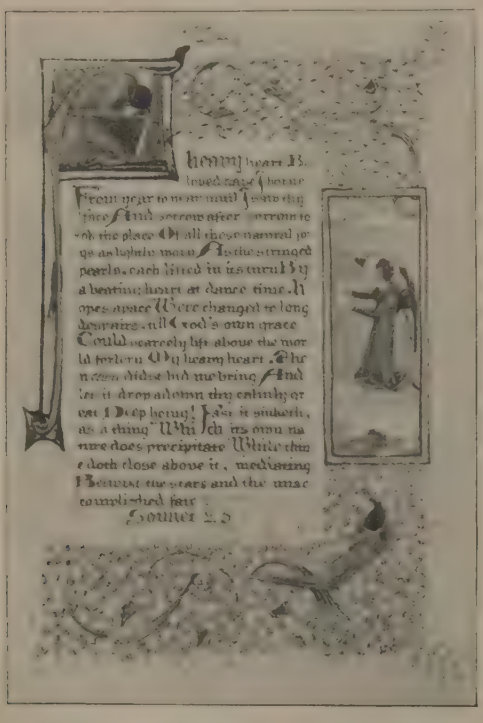
Meantime, as it must gratify art-patriots to remember, while MSS. were multiplying in the south

a more remarkable and seemingly non-derivative style had attained to such perfection in the British Isles "that it might be said to be the work of angelic rather than human diligence"—*ut vere haec omnia angelica potius quam humana diligentia jam asseveraveris esse composita*, as Giraldus Cambrensis has it. The *Book of Kells* contains the earliest and most marvellous record of this work. Mr. Wyatt tells us that his friend, Mr. Westwood, counted, with a magnifying glass, on a quarter of an inch of surface, "no less than one hundred and fifty-eight interlacements of a slender ribbon pattern formed of white lines, edged by black ones, upon a black ground." To me, personally, the *Book of Kells* hardly suggests angelic workmanship. The interwoven ribbons, the spirals, and the diagonal lines, of which its fantastic patterns are formed, have something uncanny about them, while the lacertine beasts and birds, with their baleful heads and claws, hint rather at a Satanic touch! To Ireland belongs the honour of this masterpiece, achieved while it was the most prosperous island of the West. The direct offspring of the *Book of Kells* was the Anglo-Hibernian *Durham Book*, produced at the monastery of Lindisfarne, which had been founded by St. Aidan, the friend of St. Columba, in the year 634.

A fusion of the Roman, Byzantine, and Celtic



ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPT BY MRS. TRAQUAIR



ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPT BY MRS. TRAQUAIR

styles was brought about by the *Episcopi Vagantes*, as the early missionaries were called, who, illuminated Bible in hand, propagated art as well as doctrine. The MSS. enriched with Celtic ornament influenced Continental schools, while from Rome came Pope Grègory's gift of books with St. Augustine, to be copied and assimilated by Anglo-Saxon scribes. When MSS. in Byzantine gold and purple reached England at the close of the seventh century, the elements for fusion were complete. These found their final smelting-pot in the *Scriptorium* of Hyde Abbey, near Winchester, in the tenth century. The debt which France had incurred to England through the learned and enlightened labours of Alcuin of York at the court of Charlemagne in the ninth century, she paid back in the twelfth, when, on the marriage of Eleanor of Guienne with our Henry II., French influence stimulated the arts which had pined almost to death after the Conquest. Thenceforward English illumination developed on Continental lines, its only distinction being, according to one authority, "a noble tone of solid colour." Solidity hardly seems a happy distinction in our Art, however admirable in our national roast beef, but our MSS. belie the praise. Many of them are most ethereal and elegant.

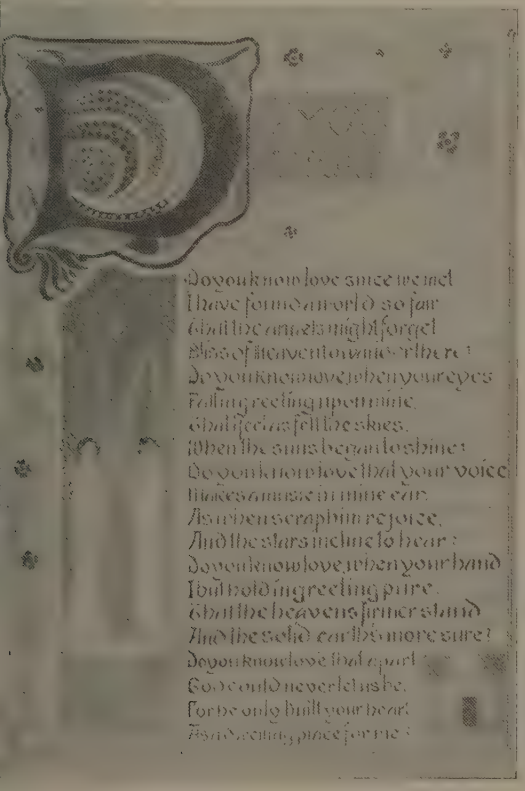
Space forbids a minute chronicle of the adult phases of illumination. They are generally classi-

ied according to the centuries they appeared in. Thus the twelfth century was famed for its pen-and-ink work, consisting of outlined and shaded capitals upon grounds of blue and green. In the thirteenth century, beautifully conventionalised leaves came into fashion, and painted miniatures had a great vogue. The fourteenth century was the heyday of the art. For brilliancy of colour, beauty of contour, ingenuity and harmony of design, that period was unsurpassed. The fifteenth century opened with the flush of decay. Miniatures changed their backgrounds of burnished gold for the landscape and architectural backgrounds of the Van Eyck and Italian schools, and naturalism invaded and paralysed the spirit of ornament.

With the invention of printing, illumination fell on evil times. Its old friend, the written word, suddenly deserted it, and took a road whither it could not follow. If it is an ill wind that blows nobody good, it is also a good wind that blows nobody ill, and printing, that root-pruned the tree of knowledge till it burgeoned out over the whole earth, nipped, nevertheless, one blossom. It

ILLUMINATED INITIAL LETTER BY EDMOND G. REUTER

multiplied the symbols of speech, but curtailed their adjunct of beauty. Yet so strong was the tradition of embellishment, that it dared not utterly disregard it. It begun by leaving blank spaces for the old decoration by hand. But wooden blocks, printed in colour, soon ousted the scribe, and printing gradually yielded to the universal craze for cheapness, which machinery, with its power of facile reproduction, has made the characteristic mania of modern times. As people began to prefer a thousand knick-knacks to one pearl of price, they grew prouder of a library of cheap editions than of a few rich and beautiful volumes. Cheap publications have their uses; they extend the influence of letters. Shakespeare can be committed to heart from a shilling copy as well as from a guinea one, which is lucky for the poor man. The abuse is when the moneyed public grudges its classics a decent dress. But at last the rage for cheapness for its own sake shows, in the book trade at least, signs of subsiding, and beauty begins to be sought again and commended.

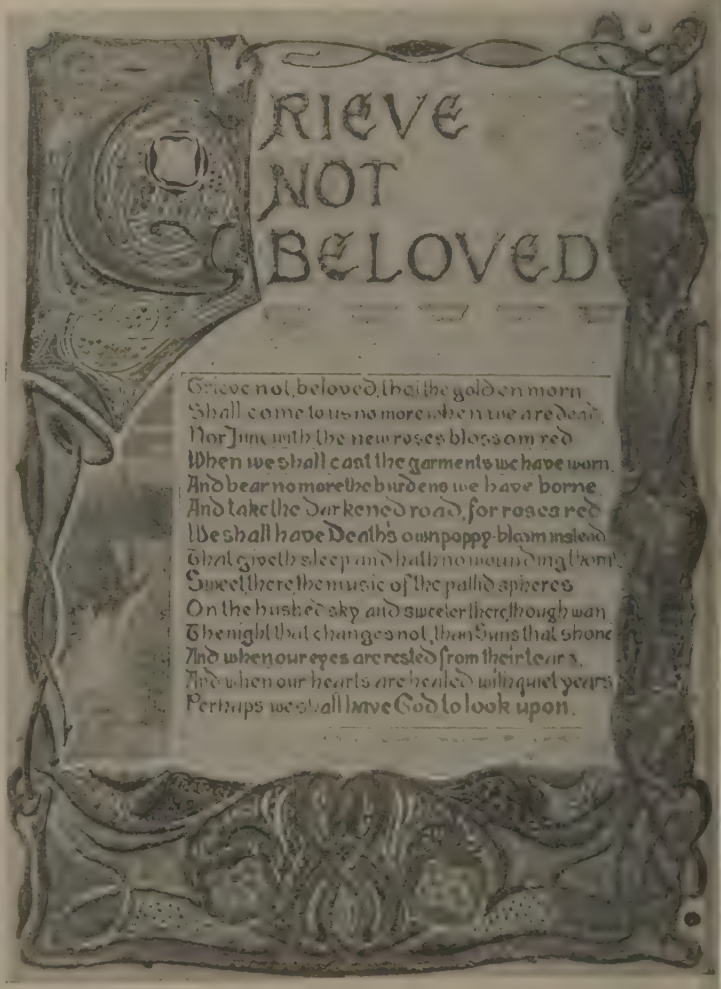


LLUMINATED MANUSCRIPT BY W. B. MACDOUGALL

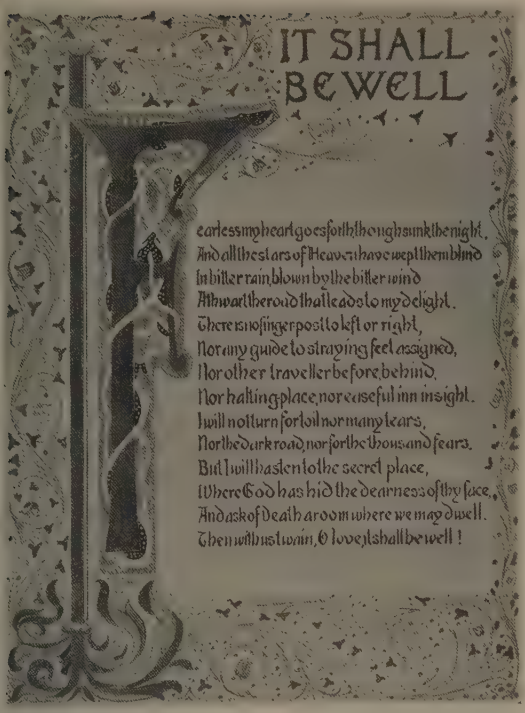
As was natural, when illumination lost its sphere of usefulness, it declined. The scribe was superseded and his cunning perished. In the Church of Rome, indeed, the art that had served it so well, found, and still finds, a narrow asylum. The Apostolic Chamber continued to employ illuminators, and thence, under Pope Urban VIII., Ant. Maria Antonotius Auximas shed a pale ray on the seventeenth century. The doges of Venice, too, in the "Ducales" enshrined some of the later talent. But contemporary inspiration had ceased, and the work of the period was mostly a mechanical repetition of the past.

Curiously enough, after many long years of coma, and with no seeming change of outward condition in our own land and century, illumination burst into new life. It re-awoke with the renascence of Gothic architecture brought about by the Pugins—father and son. The younger Pugin gave the fruits of one branch of his researches in a *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament*, which started a school of illuminators. Of these, Owen Jones was the most notable. Some decades later, Sir Edward Burne-Jones, Mr. Selwyn Image, and Mr. William Morris—the latter in a copy of the *Odes* of Horace, and one of Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat* (Fitzgerald's translation), among other things—tried the skill of their hand as illuminators; but the results are known only to the elect. In the sixties the art had a distinct "boom." It was then that Messrs. W. and G. Audsley published their *Guide to the Art of Illuminating and Missal Painting*, the preface to which opens as follows: "Owing to the rapidly increasing love for the beautiful art of illumination, and the devotion with which it is being studied throughout the length and breadth of our land, no apology is required for the appearance of this little volume." As my copy of the *Guide* belongs to the nineteenth edition, the public seem to have made this vaunting good. The forecast of the introduction in the same book, however, does not appear to have been quite fulfilled. "In the art world," Mr. Audsley writes, "among the most brilliant achievements of the present century is the revival of Gothic architecture, with its attendant train of decorative arts. It would be difficult indeed to say where the usefulness of that revival will end; already has it worked wonders in nearly all departments of ornamental art, and yet it is evident that its career has but begun. One great handmaid of architecture has already burst before the world, and we may look forward with almost certain hope to behold its revival producing works more brilliant than those which marked its brightest eras. I allude to the art of illumination."

After this it is disappointing to hear from Messrs. George Rowney & Co., as I lately did, that the demand for material for illuminating has almost ceased. Mr. Audsley's "certain hope" has at least been deferred. The movement was doubtless swelled by amateurs, who have had a dozen hobbies since then, and who, at the time, gave it a false *éclat*. Yet, all the same, his prophecy has come true to some extent, for there actually are in our midst illuminators producing work, if not more brilliant, at least as brilliant as those of Art's "brightest era."


GRIEVE NOT BELOVED
Grieve not, beloved, that the golden morn
Shall come to us no more when we are dead,
Nor June with the new roses blossom red
When we shall cast the garments we have worn,
And bear no more the burden we have borne
And take the darkened road, for rose a red
We shall have Death's own poppy-bloom instead
That giveth sleep and hath no mourning from.
Sweet there the music of the pallid spheres
On the hushed sky and sweeter there though wan
The night that changes not, than suns that shone
And when our eyes are rested from their tears,
And when our hearts are healed with quiet years
Perhaps we shall have God to look upon.

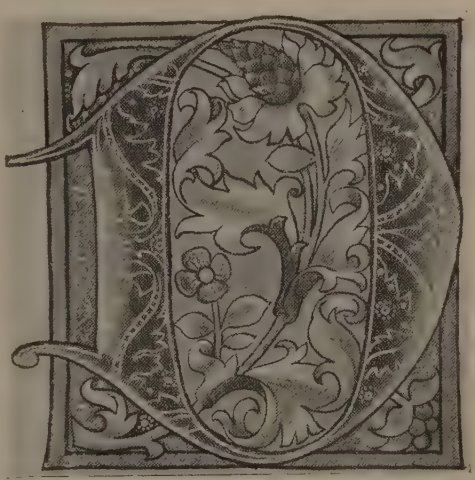
ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPT BY W. B. MACDOUGALL


IT SHALL
BE WELL
earless my heart goes forth though sunk the night.
And all the stars of Heaven have wept them blind
In bitter rain blown by the bitter wind
Athwart the road that leads to my delight.
There is no finger post to left or right,
Nor any guide to straying feet assigned,
Nor other traveller before behind
Nor halting place, nor easeful inn in sight.
I will not turn for toil nor many tears,
Nor the dark road, nor for the thousand fears.
But I will hasten to the secret place,
Where God has hid the dearness of thy face,
And ask of death a room where we may dwell.
Then with thy twain, O love, it shall be well!

ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPT BY W. B. MACDOUGALL

Pre-eminent among contemporary workers stand Mrs. Traquair, of Edinburgh, and Mr. Edmond G. Reuter, of Geneva. From the specimens of Mrs. Traquair's work reproduced here, the reader will see that it is on miniatures, that is to say, on the illustrative, rather than the purely decorative side of the art, she expends her strength, resembling in this the Italian school; though in a certain poetic intensity and compelling emotion she is more akin to the illuminators of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Mrs. Traquair's record is a full one. It began with the illumination of one of W. Garth Wilkinson's poems—"A Little Message to my Wife." Several others were added from the same author, till a small book of them grew together, amounting to seventy pages of vellum. Then followed a similar treatment of some of D. G. Rossetti's poems, on paper; a few pages of Mr. W. Morris's *Defence of Guinevere;* The Psalms, i.–xxxv. (fifty-three vellum pages, many of which have been duplicated); a tiny book of eight pages by Mrs. Traquair herself, entitled *Melrose, 1886;* Tennyson's *In Memoriam* (ninety pages, vellum); Browning's *Saul;* and Mrs. Browning's *Sonnets*, now nearly finished; besides many single pages executed from time to time. Mrs. Traquair's ideas and sympathies with regard to illumination are most interesting, and well worth giving in her own words. When asked what turned her attention to the art, she answers: "Purple and gold are delightful things to play with. Add to this a love of books, and a great desire to project feelings or emotions, and a consciousness that direct transcript from nature did not relieve me of the burden of feeling which for the moment was master." Questioned as to what periods appeal to her most, her reply is: "The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries have always appealed to me most in illuminated work, as truest and more vital in feeling, more restrained in execution, the essential unerringly seized, the non-essential rejected, line and colour used with greater delight in the inherent beauty of each (line as line, colour as colour), and a deeper insight into the capacity of line and colour to convey emotion, quite apart from the subject represented. Thus the little beasts and dragons and grotesques are always beautiful and expressive in line and colour. Indeed, the law of beauty in its wide sense, and absolute harmony of parts, forming a complete whole, governs this mode of expression. In this there seems to me to be a resemblance in the good work of the period to the Greek work of the Elgin marbles. As a child these had a never failing charm—more than charm—for me, which I think I now recognise to be in this (for want of a better word) *musical* quality: the repeated line as seen in the processions of youths and maidens in the *Theseus*, when the drapery under the left arm repeats with exquisite insistance the



ILLUMINATED INITIAL LETTER BY EDMOND G. REUTER

ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPT BY EDMOND G. REUTER

curve of the figure. The same echoing of line is strongly felt in the group of *The Fates*—again the choice of line to express emotion; the accentuated angle in the fighting amazons, the flattened curve or tightened curve all taking their place in the orchestra. Of these points, with colour added and treated in the same way, the illuminations of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are striking examples, the smallness of the work making it all the more necessary for the worker to limit himself to the vital points with a stern negation of non-essentials; all decorative art, of which illumination is but a department, being in its very nature an accompaniment, as an instrument is to the voice; and, in this, absolutely different from a picture, which stands alone on its own merits; the desired end being a whole, in which the sympathy between parts is perfect. . . . . If I meet with a book which stirs me, I am seized with the desire to help out the emotion with gold, blue, and crimson; or, is it a wall, to make it sing." Mrs. Traquair's pages, then, show us two artists at work on one thought, winning for it the twofold utterance of melodious sound and colour.

Mr. Reuter's work resembles Mrs. Traquair's only in charm. His *forte* is ornament and subdued richness of tone. This, joined to his serenity and grace of style, makes one handle his MSS. as if they were precious jewels. Indeed, in both colour and design, they have a curiously gem-like quality. Although flawless in technique, they are quite free from the hardness and monotony that so often go with mechanical perfection. Mr. Reuter took up illumination as a pastime, fired, he tells us, by W. and G. Audsley's *Guide*, already mentioned, which fell into his hands in Paris in 1864. He has illuminated many addresses, among the most recent being two to Lord Kelvin, one from the Chemical Society, and another from the Glasgow University Club, London; also two from the Chemical Society, to Professor Canizzaio and Professor Fresenius, respectively. Mr. Reuter has besides illuminated for Mr. W. Morris about a hundred and twenty pages of a copy of *The Roots of the Mountains*, printed by the Chiswick Press, and a hundred pages of a copy of *Syr Percevelle of Galles*, printed by the Kelmscott Press; also another copy of the latter book on vellum.

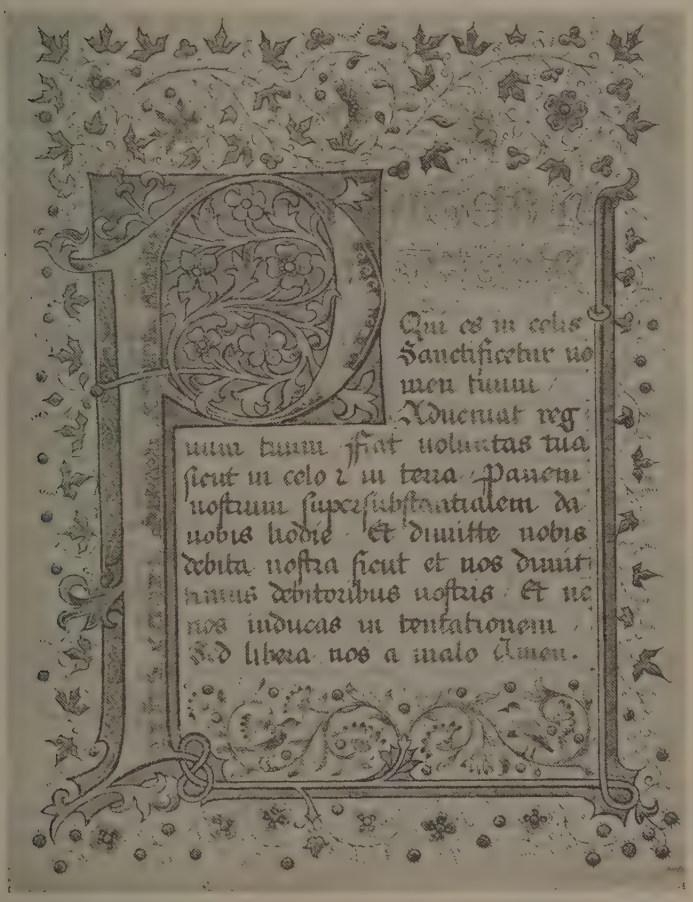
Mr. Reuter's colour schemes are always happy. The original of the page beginning "*Domine exaudi*," is in pale and dark blue, lemon, silver, and gold—foliage and flowers in relief. The treatment is distinctly modern, while the *Paternoster*, with its diapered initial, its ivy-leaf ornament, and its introduction of birds, is almost purely mediæval. Mr. Reuter's general style, as far as it is based on the past, is in the tradition of the fourteenth century. But in every case his transfiguring taste gives a fresh charm. It would be worth being a poet, if for nothing but to have this artist embellish one's MS., and an address from any society would have a double value from his skill.

The next pages given here—the work of Mr. W. B. Macdougall—are from an illuminated MS. copy he is doing of my *Songs of Love and Death*.

Mr. Morton's illuminated borders and the page by Mr. Clegg, reproduced here, are typical speci-

mens of the Birmingham School. They challenge microscopic inspection, and are marvels of minute and faultless manipulation. The most elaborate mediæval devices are adopted and carried through successfully. Mr. Morton's foliage is that cross between conventional and realistic treatment which characterised the later development of illumination. Mr. Clegg gets a rich effect from the inlaid ground of raised and burnished gold. This mechanical proficiency reminds one of the Veronese Giralamo dai Libri, who, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Vasari tells us, "executed flowers so naturally and beautifully, and with so much care, as to appear real to the beholder. In like manner he imitated little cameos and other precious stones and jewels cut in *intaglio*, so that nothing like them, or so minute, was ever seen. Among his smallest figures, such as he represented on gems and cameos, some might be observed no larger than little ants, and yet in all of them might be made out every limb, in a manner, which to be believed, must needs be seen."

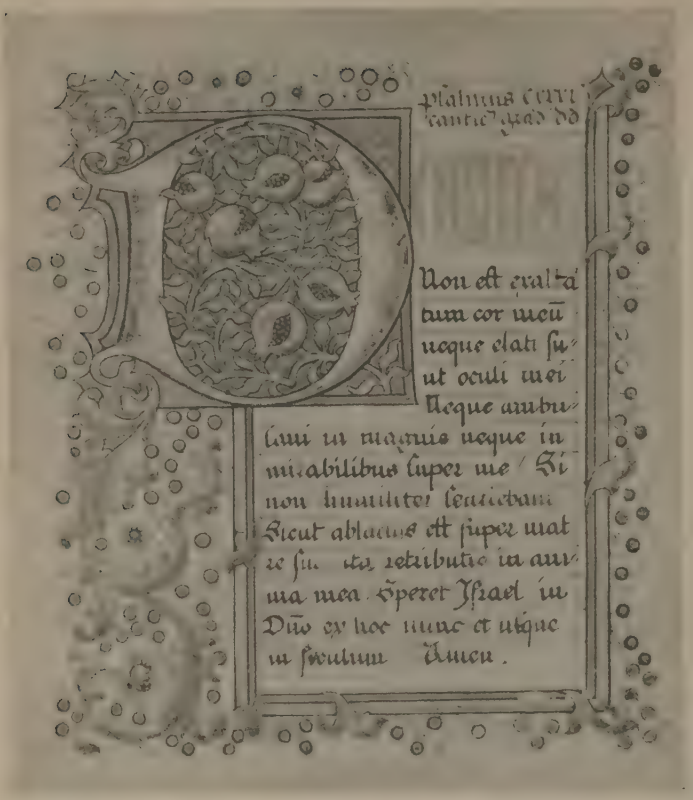
Besides isolated individuals, and schools such as the Birmingham one, there is quite a body of contemporary monastic workers. The nuns of St. Dominic's Convent, Stone; of the Carmelite Convent, Notting Hill; of St. Scholastica's Priory; and of St. Mary's Abbey, Oulton, Stone, have among them skilled illuminators. The Lord Abbot of St. Benedict's, Fort Augustus, is rich in illuminated gifts. At that monastery, also, are many illuminated "Professions," while a certain Father Lawrence is reputed a cunning artist and scribe. Similarly famed is Fr. Cuthbert Woods, a Franciscan friar of Glasgow. One hopes that these workers are properly fed with admiration and that reverence which, in the fourteenth century, made the brother monks of the Florentine Fra Jacopi and Fra Silvestro, preserve "their two right hands after their death as honoured relics."


Qui es in celis
Sanctificetur no
men tuum
Adueniat reg
num tuum fiat uoluntas tua
sicut in celo & in terra Panem
nostrum supersubstantialem da
nobis hodie et dimitte nobis
debita nostra sicut et nos dimit
timus debitoribus nostris et ne
nos inducas in tentationem
Sed libera nos a malo Amen.

ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPT BY EDMOND G. REUTER

The art of illumination is not dead, then, or even asleep. The talent is still with us, and tools such as the old monks never dreamt of, are ready to hand. The artist might well think twice before turning to vellum, if he had first to elaborate his own materials from the recipes of the ancient "secreta," and make his ink, for instance, after the directions of "Theophilus," by cutting wood of the thorn-tree in April or May, allowing this to lie for weeks in the shade, then boiling it four times, and exposing it indefinitely to the sun. Now all the trades wait upon the artist, and he has only to summon them by a postcard!

What is really wanted to restore illumination to its old place of honour among the arts, is a wider field and a bigger demand. Its present outlets are threefold; first, the occasional enrichment of monastic libraries; next, the decoration of single printed copies of *éditions de luxe* or of MS. volumes or pages; finally, the illumination of addresses to eminent people, or for



ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPT BY EDMOND C. REUTER

such public functions as jubilees, "freedoms" of cities, welcomes, majorities, testimonials, &c.

This last outlet is the largest, and might attract many genuine artists, were it not ignorantly given over to "ticket-writers" and such avowed tradesmen. The commissioning of illuminated addresses is largely in civic hands, who, unfortunately, have a trick of bungling Art concerns. Either city functionaries have a genuinely vulgar eye that revels in flaming discords, or they make a merit of encouraging a respectable trade in preference to a nondescript calling like Art! It is bad enough when the alderman follows the lead of fashion, and blindly patronises "names," but when he stolidly blocks one of the channels of Art altogether, it is a lamentable abuse of office. Not even a pen betrays commonness of mind like a paint-brush. Some of these trade productions are quite laboriously based on old models—pattern, colour, slavishly imitated—yet are no more like them than Hamlet to Hercules.

Vulgarity peeps out at every point, in the crudeness of a tint, the hardness of a contour, the falseness of a balance, the unlovely sweep of a line. But the most debasing touch of all is the substitution of photographs for miniatures. In the old MSS. miniatures summed up and crowned the beauty of a page. Illustration, ornament, lettering, each beautiful in itself, worked together towards a unity of charm. But a page with a photograph for its keynote could only achieve harmony if the design were executed in sepia, which would hardly be illuminative! If our townsfolk but knew "the pity of it!" Sewage and lighting are good things, but posterity might praise them more for handing down a few of the Art baubles they so arrogantly contemn.

Another quarter where Art is crucified is in our Religious Tract Societies. Once there was nothing too exquisite to embellish Holy Writ withal. Generation after generation of monks laboured to make Art the worthy handmaid of religion. But now no garb is considered too mean for Scripture texts and mottoes. Here, too, with the sale such things have, good Art might easily be enlisted. Cupidity or ignorance is to blame.

But though the existing sphere of illumination could be widened, I think its real future runs parallel with printing, as its past ran parallel with lettering. As ornament and colour linked themselves to the written page, ornament and colour must link themselves to the typed page, and be multiplied along with it by mechanical methods. When colour-printing processes are perfected, and the illuminator works for reproduction, illumination will have its genuine revival. Mr. J. D. Batten's drawing reproduced in the February 1896 No. of THE STUDIO, and Mr. Will Bradley's monthly message from America show the point colour printing has reached.

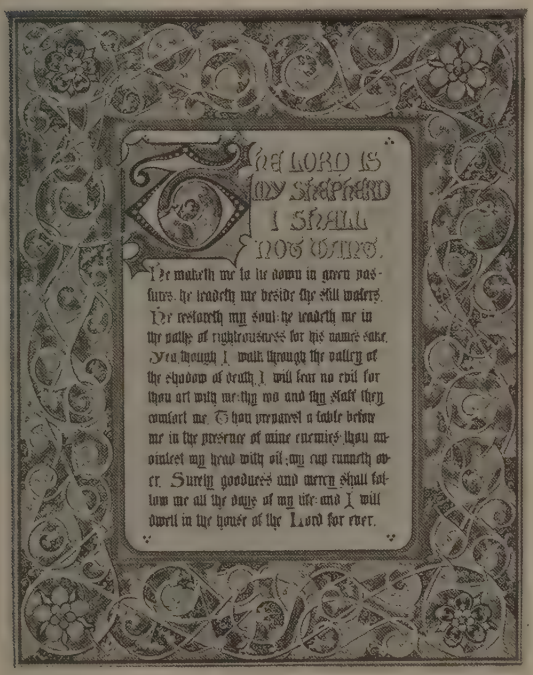
We must remember that the text did not willingly part from coloured ornament. In 1480, shortly after the invention of printing, a French press turned out *Books of Hours*, and other works in black and red, with engraved borders and illustrations. All that the multiplying process could retain, it retained. Miniatures developed into our modern illustrations. The red became relegated to the title-page, headings, marginal lines, and notes—hence the rubrics, or the red-marked pages, of the Church.

From the depths to which book-making had fallen in our century, the black-and-white men of the sixties—Millais, Houghton, Pinwell, Sandys, and others, rescued it. But the tide, though turned, crept slowly, till the big wave of the present decade rolled in with Beardsley on its crest. Only colour now lacks to complete, in the printed book, an evolution analogous to that which took place in the written one.

The pages reproduced here ought to make us impatient for the day when, multiplied many thousand times over, and yet with charm undiminished, they, and their like, may be accessible to every eye.

THE IDEAL LIFE OF A LANDSCAPE PAINTER. BY JAMES STANLEY LITTLE.

It is true to say of any man, whatsoever his status or calling, that his life approximates most nearly to what for him would be an ideal life when circumstances favour the development of his particular attributes, and permit him to give as free and as unfettered an expression to his temperament as may be possible in this world of contraries and limitations. An ideal life does not so much consist in mere success; in mere prosperity. A man may be endowed with health, wealth, and with all the superficial blessings which, outwardly, would denote that the lines have fallen to him in pleasant places; and yet his life may be the very reverse of that which, consciously or unconsciously, is, in the nature of things, an ideal life for him. Of course, in making this assertion it is necessary to take certain premisses for granted. The philosopher of the ascetic school contends that it is good for a man to be thwarted; and that fate deals unkindly with that man whom it permits to indulge his natural tastes, and to develop the gifts with which nature has equipped him, without let or hindrance. It is easy to argue that the man who was born to be a pioneer or an explorer is really blessed in being condemned to become a prosperous merchant, and that the man who ought to have been a soldier is happy in having to play his part as a politician. Without accepting the antithetical doctrine, that man, in order to attain real happiness and success, must be given the opportunity to live a life in accord with his individual desires and predilections, we may at least assert that an ideal life for any man is not to be judged solely, or indeed primarily, by the circumstances which make for his prosperity. The really successful man is he who has been able, whether by the strength of his own character or by the happy chances of his placement and environment, to give expression to that which was the better part of him, and to satisfy the cravings of his individual temperament and character.


THE LORD IS
MY SHEPHERD
I SHALL
NOT WANT.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. he leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in
the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Yea though I walk through the valley of
the shadow of death I will fear no evil for
thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they
comfort me. Thou preparest a table before
me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will
dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPT BY E. CLEGG

In considering what would be an ideal life for a man belonging to any particular profession, we must, of course, generalise. There are preachers and preachers, writers and writers, painters and painters; and the case of every individual member of any calling would need to be considered separately were we attempting to lay down exact rules, or to promulgate precise conditions. This is obviously impossible. As touching the landscape painter, however, generalisation is more than ordinarily safe, because, when we have become acquainted with the lives of all the great landscapists of the past, and when we have entered into the lives of many of the most vital landscape men of our day and generation, we cannot fail to discover what are the conditions which have best conduced, and which continue to conduce, to their well-being and to their self-assertion: or, in other words, what must be granted to them or withheld from them in order that they may follow their avocations with the maximum of satisfaction to themselves, and profit to the world. Possessing this knowledge, we can draw deductions from it without offence and without presumption. It would, however, be dangerous to attempt to generalise as to the earlier

life of the landscape painter. I will not say whether it were better for him to be born in a congenial atmosphere, his earlier efforts applauded by sympathetic and possibly informed friends, or that he should have to fight his way through indifference, ridicule, and opposition; though perhaps the balance of evidence favours the acceptance of the latter proposition. Again, it would be rash to attempt to decide whether a youth of opulence or indigence were more to the advantage of the young painter, or whether a long course of study in the schools, or the employment of these years in the fields, tended more to the attainment of the final result. Upon such points it is impossible to dogmatise with profit or safety. It will suffice to take the young painter at that point in his life when he may be considered to have started fairly on his career. It is then, when the responsibility for his future rests, or rather may be assumed to rest, with himself alone, that it becomes necessary for the sincere artist to consider wherein lies his duty to himself and what course it will be necessary for him to pursue in order that he may best achieve the goal which he has set before him.

A landscape painter cannot be said to begin to know his business until he has become thoroughly saturated with the life and spirit of the country. He must have sat for hours before Nature, reverently studying its varied panorama; its kaleidoscopic changes; its magnificent surprises. As an athlete trains his muscles by assiduous exercise and practice, so must a landscape painter train his eye and perfect his memory. It is not, however, always the country-born-and-bred artist who achieves the greater success, indeed; on the principle that human nature craves most that which is the least readily attainable, and values most the unfamiliar, many of our finest landscape painters have been town-bred men. Corot and Turner were citizens respectively of the capitals of France and England. Again, many country-born landscapists have begun their artistic careers as painters of portraits and *genre*, and have only returned to the fields in later life. A general rule may be laid down, however, and one admitting of no exception —that the great landscape painter must live, and move, and have his being in the country. The rule appears so self-evident that its enunciation here will probably provoke a smile. But self-evident as it is, it is one which scores of landscape men have found it most difficult to follow. Anxious friends are ever at their elbow, telling them that if they aspire to be known, to have their pictures talked about and bought, they must bring their works and their personalities into evidence; they must mix with their fellows and court the suffrages of powerful patrons, amateurs, and critics. The sane landscape man knows what value to put upon such advice. He need not, of course, reduce himself to an anchorite; to preserve his balance, it is necessary for him to mingle, now and again, with the world; but he knows full well that any attempt to compel the suffrages of his contemporaries by any other means save by and through the inherent force and value of his work, must inevitably result in injury to the work itself. To the landscape painter Nature is the most exacting of mistresses; she tolerates no semblance of divided allegiance, and invariably resents every act of infidelity by robbing her votary of just such measure of his power as may be in direct ratio to his offence. It would be quite possible to prove this assertion by pointing to individual instances in substantiation; but that would necessitate bringing in the names of contemporaries, and it is not well to give unnecessary pain, when every informed person can supply the examples for himself. As touching the past, the landscape man of earlier generations was scarcely confronted by this temptation. Turner had an almost princely patron in Lord Egremont; but the Sussex peer was himself a Bohemian, and had far too high a respect for the man of genius who enjoyed his friendship and hospitality, to attempt to turn him into a useful social property; an attempt, too, which if made, Turner himself would have promptly resented with the contemptuous disdain it so richly deserved. Cuyp, it is true, carried on the business of brewing, but it is clear the business worked almost automatically; it simply supplied him with the means to indulge without strain his passion for painting. Cuyp was, in the very best sense of the word, an amateur, and, in that sense, all really great landscape painters are amateurs. As soon as they develop the attributes of the tradesman, the courtier, or the diplomat, they inflict upon their art distinct injuries, and a persistence in such courses must of necessity end in destroying the art faculty altogether. Of course, one is not insensible to the fact that the absence of creature comforts, the anxiety about to-morrow's meal, must also prove distinctly hurtful; but for a landscape painter, concerned as he is with translating and suggesting that which in its variety, its infinite breadth and depth, its all-but-incommunicable subtilty, the highest wisdom lies in reducing the number of his needs to the lowest minimum. Sometimes, alas! this minimum is denied, and the painter being of the earth, like the rest of us, succumbs. Happily, however, the sum total of life's tragedy has not been added to by many such pathetic *dénouements* as this. At the last moment, the discerning purchaser arrives, or by other turn of fortune's wheel the struggling artist is permitted to struggle on. For, whether necessity or a sane choice imposes it, I say advisedly and deliberately, that no great and enduring work can be achieved in landscape art, save at the price of severe self-renunciation. In order to enter into the very soul of Nature, a painter must consent to simplify and clarify his own soul. Nature will not reveal her-

self at any other price; her inner mysteries may be perceived fitfully by the well-fed, pampered man of the world, but he can never hope to live in the atmosphere of these Arcana; never hope to possess them as the circumambient air of his own being, until he has brought himself into harmony with those hidden things by throwing off the husk of a self-indulgent civilisation. The first condition, then, making for an ideal life, insuring for the painter that his work shall be immortal, is that he should live with Nature, reverently, simply, and patiently, and with a singleness of purpose to extract from her her secrets, from which nothing can turn him. So will he be permitted to enjoy and register her beauties. So he will have his reward.

As an almost necessary corollary to this condition, two others follow. Loyalty to a particular corner of the earth—the world is too wide and life is too short to permit the strongest of painters to become a universalist—and rigorous isolation. It may be objected that Turner was a universalist, and this may be allowed. The present is not the time to discuss Turner's art; its magnificent power and range, its unhappy extravagances and formalities. It may suffice to state boldly that which I have been bold enough to assert before, that Turner's strength is not shown by the number or the variety of his productions; therein rather is his weakness demonstrated. His splendid industry, his indomitable pluck notwithstanding, Turner's art, standing by itself, has not the enduring qualities to which Constable's work can justly lay claim, nor has it exercised the influence over his successors. Constable and the men of the Norwich School had no pretentions to cosmopolitan knowledge or achievement; neither had the men of the Dutch, Nottingham, and Barbizon Schools, nor have the men of the Wealden School of to-day. In landscape art the Dutch, Early English, Nottingham, Norwich, Barbizon and Wealden Schools represent roughly nearly everything that is enduring in the landscape art of the world. Turner's art was not altogether free from the taint of the theatre, as in justice it must be allowed that Richard Wilson's was not. To labour this contention would lead me too far afield: it will suffice to say that the greatest masters of landscape art have grasped that great initial truth as affecting all fine art, that the obviously startling and wonder-producing effects of Nature are not, of necessity, its most intense manifestations, but that there often lie, where the eye that has not the second and inseeing sight would perceive nothing but commonplace. Therefore, save as a rest and tonic, the change of scene and of air necessary for the mental and physical well-being of all of us, it is not only not essential that the landscape painter should be constantly changing his *locale*, but it may be asserted that in the majority of cases such a course of action is distinctly baneful to him. Elsewhere, the present writer has dealt with a small group of young painters who, for the past ten years and upwards, have been working in Sussex and Surrey, and who, for convenience, he has called the Wealden School. Contemporary criticism now allows that these men are in the very fore-front of the landscape art of their day and generation, and in each case their work has been done mainly in and about the particular village in which they have pitched their tents. It must always be borne in mind that to do this—to check that wandering spirit, that desire to be away, seeking fresh beauties and experiences, a desire peculiarly incident to the artistic temperament—makes a most exacting demand upon the painter, and one to which he does not submit without imposing upon himself the most rigorous repression. Nevertheless, he knows that this repression is necessary. It is only by becoming familiar with scenes that their full potentialities reveal themselves. A painter often waits for years before the picture is discovered in a given scene or scrap of landscape. Then, under some happy influence external to himself, blending with some fortuitous receptivity in himself, the picture, or the germ of the picture, is revealed, and the artist's harvest is reaped; for at the back of the impression lies the knowledge of the salient characteristics of the scene to be painted. Never was the homely saying, "The rolling stone gathers no moss," truer than in the case of the landscapist. The impressions received in flying about from place to place lack the depth and the volume of those which are the result of long watching and patience, when, the psychological moment having arrived, the fruitful soil is fructified by a kindly outside influence.

Then as to isolation. It may be said that the artist's nature being sensitive, none needs more than he the genial influences of sympathetic human contact; and, doubtless, in a measure this is true. This very sensitiveness, however, makes it extremely difficult for a painter of Nature to find in his contemporaries any real help. It is his business to cultivate and accentuate to the very utmost his own individual outlook upon nature. In this personal individual note lies the very essence of his power, and its presence in his work gives to it its chief value. No doubt general discussions on art problems and on the technical difficulties of painting; reciprocal confidences on the birth-pangs of production, on the emotions and moods which anticipate, as they accompany, the processes of gestation, are healthful and needful. Still, for the most part, these are best left for the moments of rest, and are generally disturbing and mischievous if they are the daily portion of the painter. The Barbizon painters were scarcely more intimately associated than are the Wealden painters of to-day. They occasionally met; they occasionally painted together, but, in the main, they evolved their

art in, to use a term much in vogue of late, "splendid isolation."

It may be objected that I have made of the ideal landscape painter an extremely selfish and unamiable creature. He must eschew society; must lead a life of isolation; must regard his art as paramount above all; must cultivate, at all costs, his individuality He must reduce his life to order, though Nature made him a child of impulse; must be self-reliant and self-opinionated, and must find his greatest pleasure in his own work rather than in that of his predecessors and contemporaries. He must be indifferent to the rewards this world has to give, whether pecuniary or academic, and must paint to please himself, those the good Lord gives him, and for posterity. But the landscape painter is anything but selfish and unamiable. He is, as a rule, the most engaging and simple of men. He must be self-centred, not selfish. So far as an ideal life for him is concerned, all that I have written may be summed up in the assertion, that everything which tends to develop his individuality and to favour the natural growth of his genius, while preserving his high sanity, constitutes for him the ideal life.

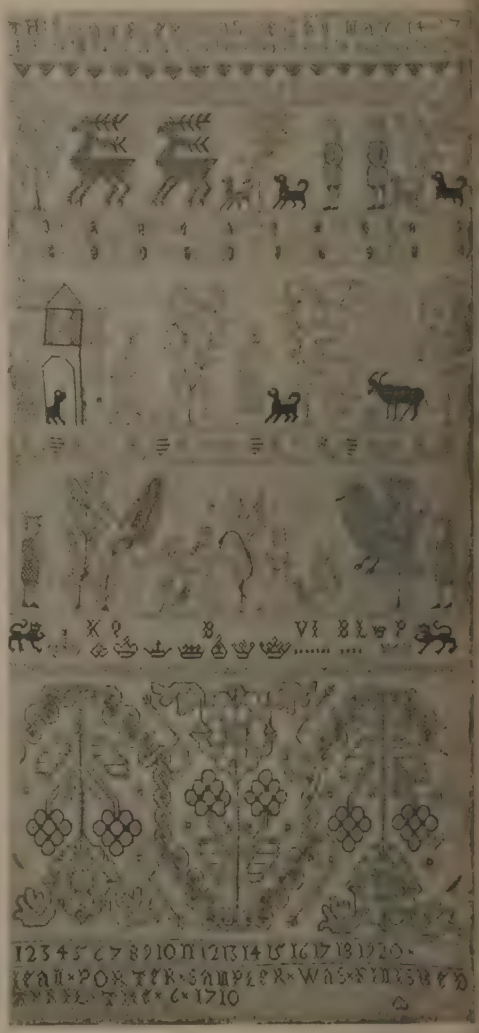
JAS. STANLEY LITTLE.

THE SAMPLER, AN APPRECIATION AND A PLEA FOR ITS REVIVAL. BY GLEESON WHITE.

IT is a matter of surprise that the making of samplers, so common in bygone times, has not been revived in these days of "Arts and Crafts." As an object for collecting it has found votaries; foremost among whom is, most probably, Mr. Andrew Tuer, from whose superb collection the examples here reproduced, with one exception, are taken. Mr. Tuer is a most faithful devotee of the past, and his collections number so many different subjects that probably he may deem this to be one of his least important; yet, notwithstanding the attractions of the others, it cannot be considered as the least interesting. South Kensington has a bare half-dozen samplers, Bethnal Green Museum a couple. The two or three I had remembered in my own household proved to have vanished, and the various friends I asked, with few exceptions, were also samplerless. But there are choice examples treasured in many other private collections; and did space allow, a record of these might be extended almost indefinitely.

It is not as an object for collecting that the sampler is interesting to THE STUDIO, but as a vital instance of traditional craft, handed down in all its purity from mother to daughter century after century. When you look at the embroideries on Egyptian mummy cloths, you may well believe that if no good Egyptologist possesses a sampler worked by a daughter of the Pharaohs (as he may for all I know), nevertheless there must have been plenty of 'prentice pieces and pattern-sheets among those clever needleworkers.

But here we are not archæologically bent, and shall find ample material for the sampler if we confine ourselves to English specimens of the last three centuries. If the study provokes some enthusiastic maidens to enter the lists as competitors, who would revive the glories of the old sampler with culture approved to-day superadded, we can face the enterprise with equanimity; for in itself the sampler is of educational value, and were its cult revived it might exercise a very important influence on the art of embroidery.



THE SAMPLER OF JEAN PORTER. 1710
(From Mr. John Lane's Collection)

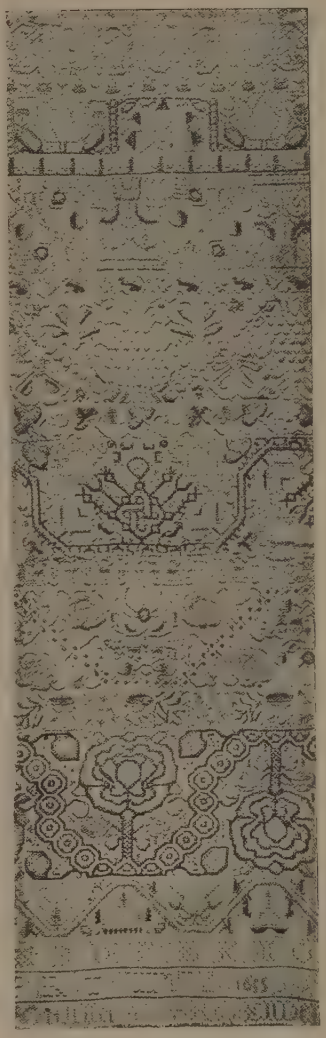
But the sampler is not only a useful educational adjunct it is an idyll like Cranfurd as Mrs. Gaskell painted it, one not even confined to the domain of our great grandmother. For Elaine had hardly "fashioned for Lancelot's shield a case of silk and braided thereupon all the devices blazoned on the shield, and added of her wit a border fantasy of branch and flower," unless she had previously achieved a sampler.

Probably no relic of forgotten maids and mothers has so personal an interest as the sampler, with its maiden name in full, its pious verse, or its folk-rhyme. It is a biography in little, a microcosm of a child's eternity, a lasting record of patient precision, of careless drudgery, or of sheer clumsiness, whichever be the character unwillingly betrayed by its stitches.

There are few families that did not possess until lately, among their treasured trifles, a sampler or two, often merely homely things of alphabets and numerals, with the simplest cross-stitching by way of border. But these, charming as they are, do not concern us here. Nor is any plea for conscious art put forward on the sampler's behalf; it is for its loyal obedience to precedent, and its delight in repeating devices approved by centuries that the old sampler belongs to the outer courts of art.

One can think of nothing to-day more typically feminine than this object. There are legends of sickly lads and exiled sailors disporting themselves in its manufacture; but we doubt if many a sampler—possibly not a single specimen—survives with a male name proudly embroidered across its surface.

It is said that old age has found weak hands at the unwonted task. Certainly one grave divine to-day, and one learned doctor devote their thinking time to not dissimilar pursuits. But exceptions of this sort have no effect on the broad statement, that a sampler is essentially a feminine enterprise; when the knight was winning his spurs his future queen of beauty was grappling with less deadly steel, and facing the ordeal of elaborate stitchings. The sampler was the little-go of polite education, the Newnham and Girton for sweet girl-graduates of the past. Not only this, it was the diploma of merit. Past mastery in jam-making, the compounding of pot-pourri, and the like, left but transitory results, legends which later generations were apt to deem pious, but exaggerated; but the sampler, framed and glazed, kept the domestic virtues of its owner before the eyes of her descendants, as her marble epitaph recorded her more noble virtues in the village church. Indeed, in certain Dutch samples the canvas was pre-arranged to hold the samplers of many generations, each daughter in turn adding her quota to the roll of honour of the family.



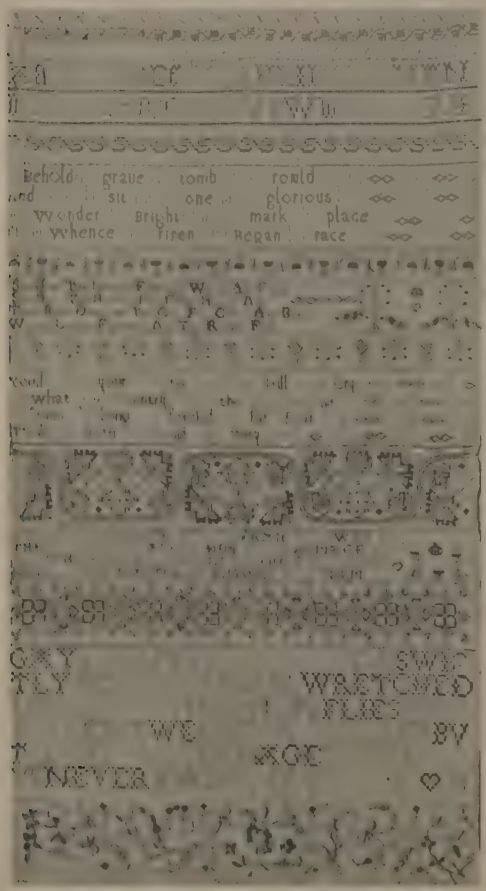
THE SAMPLER OF JOANNA WARREN
1655

To-day samplers are not likely to be restored to their past position socially. Probably, should they be revived, sewing-machines will be called into play, and the labour of months distanced by the labour of hours. Then, too, we shall be conscious that the design is reckoned as a most important factor, that so-called originality is deemed the highest virtue, and that orderly following of precedent is looked upon as an ignoble shift to deaden one's own personality. For to-day most people are far less eager to make their work art than to prove themselves to be artists.

To pass from the abstract to the individual, we may notice first a sampler which is dated 1655, and is perhaps the most beautiful of all the designs illustated here, and one that has few rivals in Mr. Tuer's collection or elsewhere. It is signed Joanna Warren, and dated 1655. In the pages of THE STUDIO it may sound like a recantation of its often declared purpose, to extol this sampler for its lack of originality. No doubt every stitch was copied literally from older work, designs that were possibly brought over originally by the Crusaders. Yet with every recognition of the artists whose graceful invention has often been eulogised herein, there is another aspect of decoration which is not unworthy

of praise. If you can draw inspiration direct from Nature, and within the limits of your craft, be it embroidery, metal work, or wood-inlay, express the essentials of natural forms within the more clumsy and conventional method that craft allows, it is the most worthy thing to be done. But if, and the exception applies to all but one in a thousand, you can only imitate Nature foolishly and imperfectly, then it is far better to copy blindly and with painstaking the best work of older hands—designs that have proved their essential fitness, patterns that are really fine decoration, ornament that really beautifies the object to which it is applied.

It is no proof of originality to imitate Mr. Voysey, or Mr. William Morris, to adapt a book-cover by Mr. Ricketts, or a wall-paper by Mr. Walter Crane to some other purpose. True, it shows better taste to adapt fine work of the present day than to copy the published patterns of the fancy-work dealers, but also less reverence. The past is free and out of copyright. No architect is accused of plagiarism if he introduces a pointed arch. The Greek fret or the Persian rose is as much one's own as the daisy or a wild snowdrop. If you want to make a pattern of daisies and do not discover any way to weave them into your design except by a painful effort to imitate a water-colour study of the flower, would it not be best to forget the daisy and choose some of those forms which suggest flowers and foliage? but do not attempt to express botanical facts or pictorial impressions. In this sampler any one of its various bands of ornament supplies an example to be copied; not this time adapted but imitated exactly, and yet the mechanical paraphrase will delight the eye of a true artist far more than many ambitious efforts of the modern crewel-work and "art embroideries" to rival paintings by stitchings.



ANONYMOUS SAMPLER NO DATE

The exquisite proportion of this sampler, the length being about three and a third times its width, distinguishes it at a glance. It is unnecessary here to repeat the oft-expressed advice that a parallelogram should always be formed of fractions of squares; not exactly two, or three, or four, but an irregular repeat. In all human probability the mathematical proportion of this particular panel never entered into the mind of its designer any more than it does in most cases to-day; but the lucky result proves instinct, and *that* is the greatest gift of all. A good decorator does a thing, not by rule, but because it somehow pleases him most in one scale, or to one proportion. This automatic choice is often enough the one that betrays the real artist even if all else be inept and clumsily carried out.

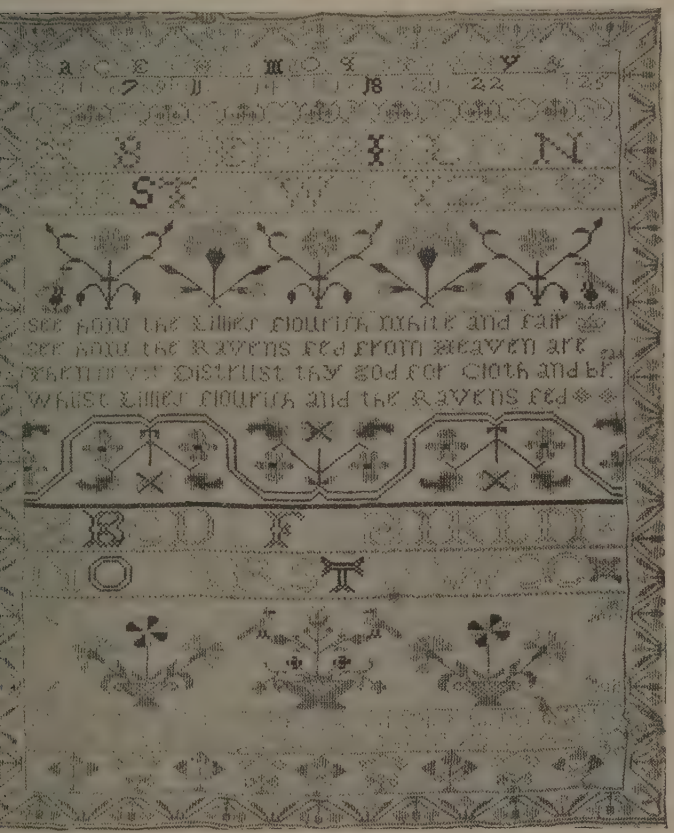
A very beautiful sampler, upon which I cannot decipher a date, is that shown on this page. There is one not dissimilar at South Kensington Museum which is labelled "seventeenth century." The really beautiful repeating designs which run across it in bands are obviously modelled from Oriental examples. One would not be surprised to discover their prototypes in Eastern embroidery to-day. For the patient East, when a masterpiece is achieved, is satisfied to repeat it for generations, while we require a new one annually, and care little if it be better or worse than its predecessors so long as it is novel. To me, I must confess, this sampler is an object lesson which one cannot look upon without a sense of shame. There is hardly a single needleworker to-day who would not rank her own original (?) designs as more vital and personal than an exact copy of these old patterns. In a visit lately to a show of modern embroideries the well-intentioned lady superintendent was aghast at the idea that any one should be illustrated. "They are all entirely original," she said; "we pride ourselves on that." Yet, with scarce an exception, they consisted of sprays of jessamine, roses, violets, honeysuckle, and the like, thrown "carelessly and gracefully" askew, or dotted about in half-symmetrical fashion.

I employ the phrase "carelessly and gracefully"

THE SAMPLER OF
SUSANNA NEWHAM
1760

cause that conveys the intention of the worker; rranged without care and devoid of grace" would a far more literal description. The power of l invention in design is always rare, even among se professionally devoted to the art; to take a awing from nature worked as accurately as brush or ncil can depict it, and burlesque its subtle planes d infinitely varied curves by stitches is misspent genuity. It is just because the motives of these mplers are patterns made out of the limited raight and diagonal lines the canvas offers that e can admire them thoroughly and unreservedly. A sampler with most varied attractions is that Iean Porter, 1710. It is distinctly transitional, e "I" for "J;" the fine bands at the lower part e both orthodox and really good. But the figures ggest at once the Bayeux tapestry, and the rsery slate. One imagines that its little worker s permitted to exercise her own fancy. Possibly is typical of a change of governesses. Adam d Eve, guarded by two gigantic fowls of doubtful arentage, a couple of marvellous stags, which show n Assyrian dislike to perspective and tricks of foreshortening, supply a goodly pageant. But the row of crowns, like a chess problem which has lost its ground plan, the simple letters dispersed among them—all speak of caprice and irregular application. Can it be that the monitress herself worked the orthodox portions? Remembering the much re-touched crayon drawings of a later period which boarding schools produced, the doubt will insinuate itself. But taken for all in all, it is an erratic, lawless specimen that fascinates one nevertheless.

Kitty Harison, in 1770, employs the same verse, "See how the lilies flourish white and fair," which appears in an earlier undated specimen illustrated (page 60), and on many others probably. On this also is the "corn-flower" motive, as we should call it, which is more likely a direct copy of the conventional "Indian Pink," a very frequent device in Oriental designs. Despite the squat shape, it is by no means an uncomely panel. The ornament is well chosen and well placed. The alphabet is not good—the "serifs" of the letters, and the sprawling X are especially bad. The reversed P, which stands for Q, is worth noting. In small letters the P's and Q's, which gave rise to the proverb, still maintain their similarity; but in modern capital letters, the Q has coquetted with O, and conquered all along the line.

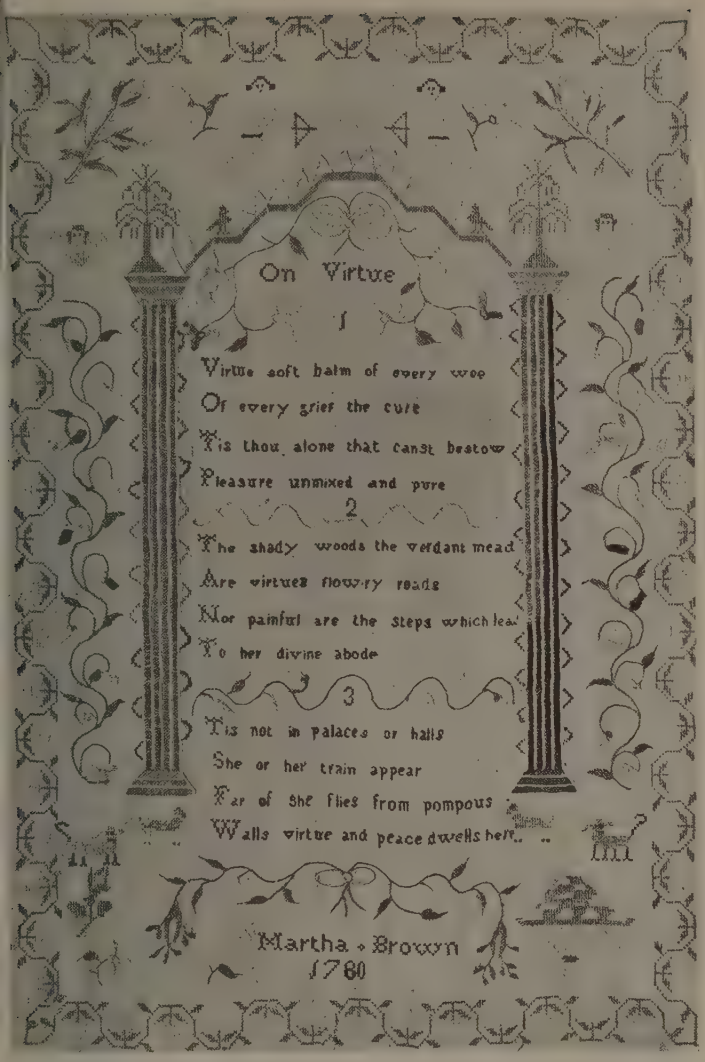

SEE HOW THE LILIES FLOURISH WHITE AND FAIR
SEE HOW THE RAVENS FED FROM HEAVEN ARE
WHATSOEVER DISTRUST THY GOD FOR CLOTH AND BI
WHILST LILIES FLOURISH AND THE RAVENS FED

IE SAMPLER OF KITTY HARISON 1770

Now we reach a sampler (page 61) that is at once typical and yet more than merely a type—a masterpiece of its kind. One could well believe that the dainty art of Miss Greenaway could be traced back to this particular example. When "Elizabeth Sufanna Newham" (for we may take the letters between as equivalents to the "pillow-words" of Japanese poetry, which are purely decorative adjuncts), worked this in the Ashby Hospital in the year 1760, we may safely believe that she never foresaw an eulogy in an art-magazine more than a hundred years after. In all probability the worthy maiden had never heard of Art with a big A; and was quite innocent of being a loyal disciple to

the principles of symmetrical convention ; which are nevertheless most rigidly obeyed throughout her design. Not all the forestry which modern decoration has produced can beat the orchard of trees and shrubs she has set forth. In this formal garden no house appears ; but at the foot, the striking figures of Adam and Eve confront you. Supercilious and haughty in their manner, they seem rather proud of the serpent than otherwise, and evidently, as the first-created nobility should be, are rejoiced to find heraldic animals rushing to do homage, and obviously ready to take up their positions as "supporters" thus early in the history of the world. Except the band immediately below the declaration of faith which heads the panel, and possibly in the border, there is little trace of Oriental motives. But even so cautious a statement is advanced with diffidence. On turning to some

THE SAMPLER OF ANN HOPE 1777


On Virtue
1
Virtue soft balm of every woe
Of every grief the cure
'Tis thou alone that canst bestow
Pleasure unmixed and pure
2
The shady woods the verdant mead
Are virtues flowry roads
Nor painful are the steps which lead
To her divine abode
3
'Tis not in palaces or halls
She or her train appear
Far of she flies from pompous
Walls virtue and peace dwells here
Martha Brown
1780

THE SAMPLER OF MARTHA BROWN 1780

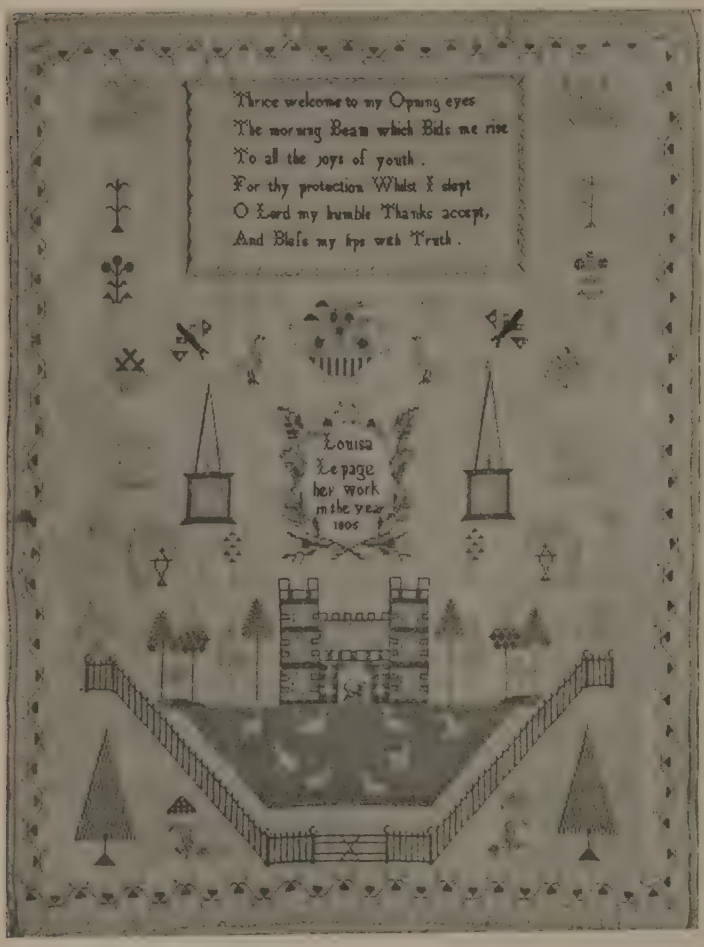
always the desired goal. With every improvement in mere technique, the tendency is always towards pictorial versions of objects, with recognition of shading, perspective, and other qualities that belong, or should belong, exclusively to pictorial art. But this example is a vivid record of the charm which the most simple design preserves for ever, so long as it does not seek to controvert the direct method of its production. Every one of its neat stitches is a mathematical affair—no "feeling" can be traced, no "handling." It is just skilled human mechanism. And yet lowly as its technique may be, and the work of a simple-minded, artless girl (probably), it retains a certain charm which is absent often enough in far more marvellous embroidering. It is not with a hope that any art student will draw little trees like these, or carve, or paint them, that one recommends a serious study of this sampler, but only to show that its maker, consciously or unconsciously, never tried (if we except her marvellous Adam and Eve) to do more than she could accomplish, and did that little so well that to-day her work affords genuine pleasure, even to one fairly well acquainted with most of the best examples of decoration the last dozen years have produced.

of the official handbooks to old embroideries published in Japan, one finds so many motives absolutely identical with those of western nations that to refer the source of all these widely distributed devices to any known origin would be folly.

Be that as it may, the delightfully stiff flowers in pots, and the basket character of the latter, are distinctly in the manner of the Anglo-Dutch style, which has of late been called *Queen Anne*. In appreciating the frank obedience to the angular forms imposed by the stitch, we need not give too much credit to the worker. For as later examples show, a false imitation of Nature is

The sampler of Martha Brown in 1780 is vitiated by the sham classicism of its time. Poor little Martha, can we not imagine the human abhorrence with which she added stitch to stitch, until the didactic quatrains were duly wrought? Let us hope the very angular Cupids who surmount this chaste eulogy of virtue gave her some joy. The border is obviously a good copy; but the decoration of the "field" betrays the modern attempts at realism which confront us as "high-art" on the walls of 1890 no less frequently than in 1780

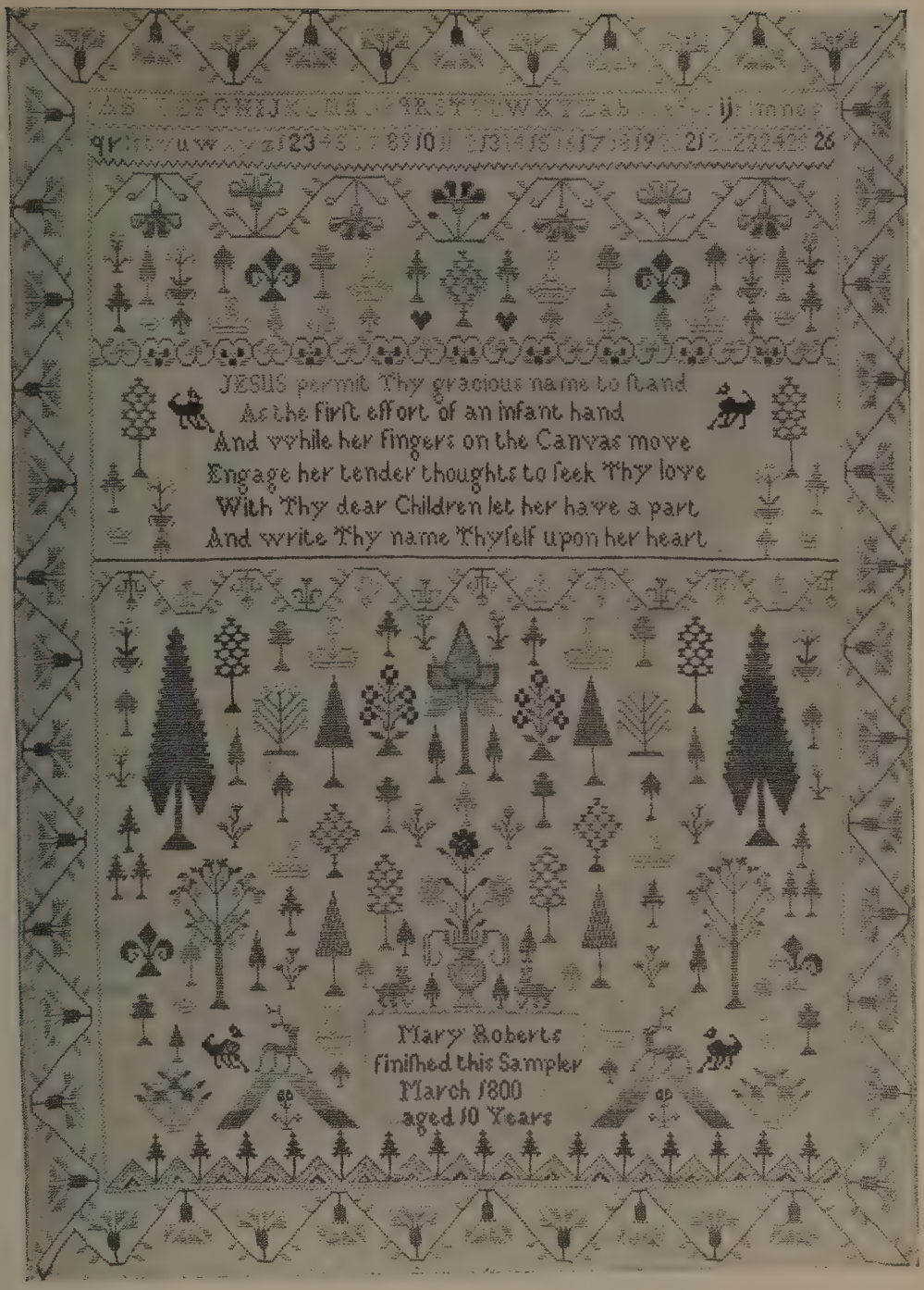
Such a sampler one fancies the Misses Pinkerton may have had framed in the solemn drawing-room of The Mall, Chiswick. We know that the estimable Miss Barbara, in her "billet" of farewell, proclaimed that her pupil "in every variety of embroidery and needlework will be found to have realised her friends' *fondest wishes*." No doubt a quarter of a century later the embroidery at such a high-class academy reflected the mode of its day, and scorned the archaic border, which alone prevents Martha Brown's sampler from the lowest place. Yet it, or its duplicate, was doubtless one of the archives of the Misses Pinkerton's past—exhaling the praise of virtue between classic columns, in that chaste academy, under the patronage of the great lexicographer himself.


Thrice welcome to my Opning eyes
The morning Beam which Bids me rise
To all the joys of youth.
For thy protection Whilst I slept
O Lord my humble Thanks accept,
And Bless my lips with Truth.
Louisa
Lepage
her work
in the year
1805

THE SAMPLER OF LOUISA LEPAGE 1805

A sampler, which is really a map in needlework, may seem to be begging the title. Yet, as the sampler was usually an educational task, worked in school-hours, whether at home or at a "finishing academy for young ladies," the incongruity is not so great as it might appear. Maps were not infrequently worked by the needle long before the date of this one by Ann Hope, 1777 (page 64). But recently I saw at the rooms of that most admirable Society in Sloane Street, some tapestry belonging, if memory can be trusted, to the Bodleian Library, Oxford, which had been most skilfully repaired. This was a huge map of the county—or part of it—several yards long, and more picturesque in treatment by far than the less ambitious map of England and Wales, with part of Scotland and Ireland, which is figured here. But lately a paper on *Tapestry Maps*, read before the British Association, proves that the examples are by no means unique.

In the design we illustrate, beyond the quaint little ships dotted haphazard on the "British Ocean," the Irish Sea, and the British Channel, stern reality has eschewed the groups of trees and the houses of its earlier forbears. But scale, of course, would not permit these latter details. Why the parallels of latitude and longitude are omitted is not quite clear; but probably it was felt that their introduction would tend to confuse the lettering, which is so legible and accurate, that one wishes for a Bradshaw with so clear a chart. Does it hold suggestion for the lady cyclist to embroider some part of her costume, rational or irrational, with maps of the district? It certainly suggests in a larger scale a capital decoration for counterpanes (or bed-spreads as modernity styles them) for the nursery. Imagine "the dear land of counterpane," with real mountains and oceans depicted, whereon the wakeful little occupant could make imaginary travels and sometimes engage in sending "his ships in fleets all up and down the sheets," as Robert


JESUS permit Thy gracious name to stand
As the first effort of an infant hand
And while her fingers on the Canvas move
Engage her tender thoughts to seek Thy love
With Thy dear Children let her have a part
And write Thy name Thyself upon her heart
Mary Roberts
finished this Sampler
March 1800
aged 10 Years

THE SAMPLER OF
MARY ROBERTS
1800.

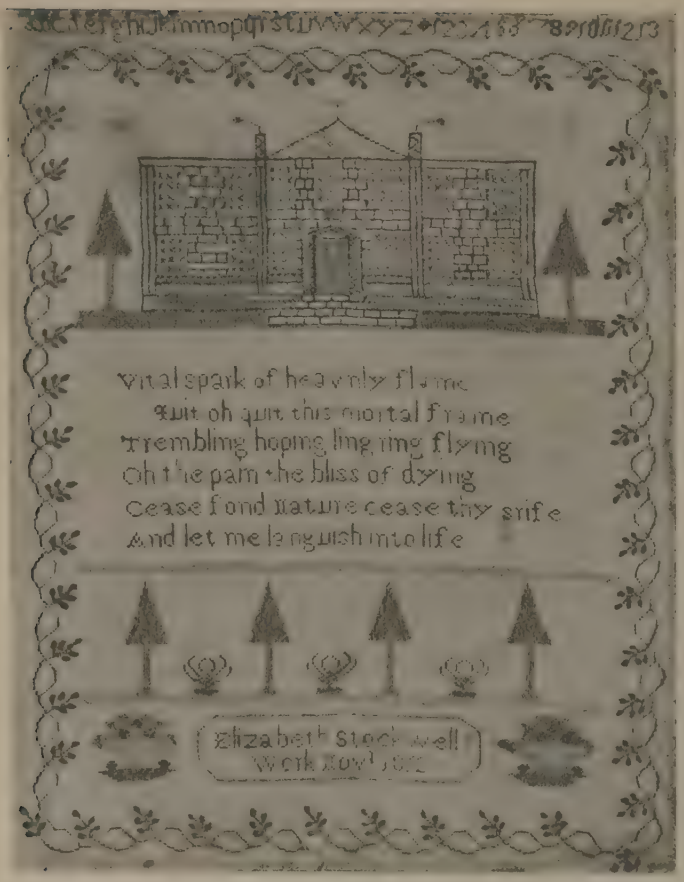
Louis, the well-beloved, tells you he did as a child. After due appreciation of this map, and admiration of the compass boxed near the Bristol Channel, it would be ungenerous to carp at the cartouche whereon the legend appears. Its sprawling semi-realistic flowers show the fatal tendency towards weak naturalistic decoration which even the sampler was not fated to escape.

Although in Elizabeth Susanna Newham's sampler one found a forest of trees, yet that of Mary Roberts, March 1800 (page 67), contains still more; it is like a nurseryman's specimen plot. Dear little trees they are, closely related to the curled wooden varieties of German toy-boxes, and with more than a family likeness to the clipped growth of a formal garden. To do justice to their stiff charms would entail many pages of appreciation, and only reiterate the moral which almost each one of these samplers preaches. But the border of this one—the flower form so naïvely disposed, the ingenious device adopted in "turning its corners" (always the test point of a good border design), its proportion to the whole—these things may have come by accident; but the result is a most excellent art of its sort. Probably the ten years old maiden, whose first effort of an infant hand was not accomplished, one fears, without many hours of weariness, and possibly many hot tears and indignant remonstrances and sighs at the futility of so many hours wasted that might have been spent in the open air, copied every stitch from a previous example; yet, judging from the distinct individuality of each sampler which has come under my notice, it would seem the whole composition was usually a rearrangement and never an exact copy of previous designs.

ANONYMOUS SAMPLER NO DATE

The decoration which adorns the master-piece of Louisa Lepage, 1804 (page 66), is most probably based upon older work. The powdering of its devices, the border and the castellated edifice, all look like respectful obedience to precedent. But the palings and gate suggest much later influence, and the ugly framework to the inscription is, as the hideous obelisks show, obviously influenced by contemporary taste. With these exceptions, however, how very naïve and artless the work is. Despite its stiffness and unpleasant perspective, a certain fairyland is within those prim palisades, the animate objects upon its lawn—which may be white rabbits, or anything else you prefer, are distinctly amusing. It is the most original of all, using the word in its meaner sense, and yet by no means the most attractive.

Elizabeth Stockwell, when she wrought the façade of the wondrous edifice which adorns her sampler (page 70), had


Vital spark of heavnly flame
quit oh quit this mortal frame
trembling hoping lingring flying
Oh the pain the bliss of dying
Cease fond nature cease thy strife
And let me languish into life
Elizabeth Stockwell
Work'd 1812

THE SAMPLER OF ELIZABETH STOCKWELL 1812

evidently strong symmetrical tendencies. For not merely is her delightfully impossible façade of doors and windows more unpractical than those of a doll's house, but the smoke of its two chimneys defies all natural law in order to preserve the balance of the elevation. Not even the particularly inapt quotation —"Pope's Ode," as its pet name runs—can arouse one to praise this piece of needlework for its æsthetic qualities. The border indeed is good, but Elizabeth was as unable to turn a corner gracefully as she would have been had you set her on a bicycle. In fact, here is a sampler shorn of all charm, except the naïvety of eighty-five years ago, which it retains undesignedly.

The sampler with the verse which begins "When I was young and in my prime" (page 69) reveals a secret forgotten by young people to-day. They do not realise that the parents of a few generations ago inculcated a formal vassalage from their children. The curious attitude which could induce a mother to set her own praises for her child to perpetuate seems hardly conceivable to us. The prig as child still survives in goody-goody literature; but one hopes the supernal prig —the prig as parent, is for ever obsolete. Mrs. Barbauld, nay, even the admirable Maria Edgeworth, and the rest, were never satisfied with depicting parents who did their duty none too silently; their ideal — a Roman mother, who ranked justice (as she imagined it) the highest good—is no doubt honourable. But what mother worthy the name ever required an official recognition of her care? One mother did, as this sampler bears witness, but perhaps it would be unjust to believe it was "the parent" herself who set the words. Quite possibly a stern maiden aunt might have been the offender. Somehow the sampler provokes one by its self-conscious rectitude. Its little trees are delightful and of fine ancestry; its house is not wholly unworthy of Queen's Gate; its one peacock was obviously too exhausting an effort to bear repetition. It is a really well-designed, well selected sampler, with a self evident sense of its own importance. But one fears its making was fraught with tears and weariness. It seems hardly possible that its artful pretence to be historic can be really a devout tribute of old age; yet it may have been worked by an old lady for her grandchild, and if so, all the theories advanced fall to the ground, and one hates it no more.

"Ann Buss worked this ninth year of her age," runs the legend (page 71), and elsewhere "Althorpe 1841" fixes the date. But excepting the house, the motives are all based on precedent, and show a variety of delightfully appropriate patterns common to the whole period covered by samplers. But in this as in others, one notices how secondary a part the mere alphabet plays. Before studying the samplers in a collection, one had formed the idea that its chief, if not its only purpose, was to provide a series of alphabets and numerals for reference in marking household linen, before the days of unbleachable inks and woven name tapes. But this sampler, like at least half of those illus-

trated, would seem to show that a training for embroidery was the main purpose, and the utilitarian matter of linen-marks quite a secondary aim. In the earlier examples especially, there seems to have been a distinct effort to provide a variety of narrow and wide bands, which could be worked *ad libitum* on robes, and other articles of infantile and adult apparel. That time could be spared from the routine of school for learning how to shape letters in stitches is itself proof of the changed conditions that ruled then; but that every child should be potentially equipped as in embroideries is still more proof. Without asking whether it was not a more worthy aim to work a sampler well than play a sonata badly, one must needs regret that the rudimentary knowledge of one of the oldest of feminine arts should be lost. Of the sampler with fine drawn-work, or of those with raised flowers; of samplers that were really pictures in stitches, and a thousand and one other varieties, space forbids mention. Even the Arts and Crafts of 1896 contains the entry of "a sampler," but the object is only distinctly related to those we are considering here, as it includes several sheets of admirable motives worked by Mrs. Lewis F. Day to a large scale and quite without lettering. But the subject is said to be in preparation for a monograph, so that this hasty attempt to indicate its record and aims is but a preliminary effort to arouse interest in a domestic trifle that is singularly fascinating in its way, and that may not long wait a more formal historian.

GLEESON WHITE.

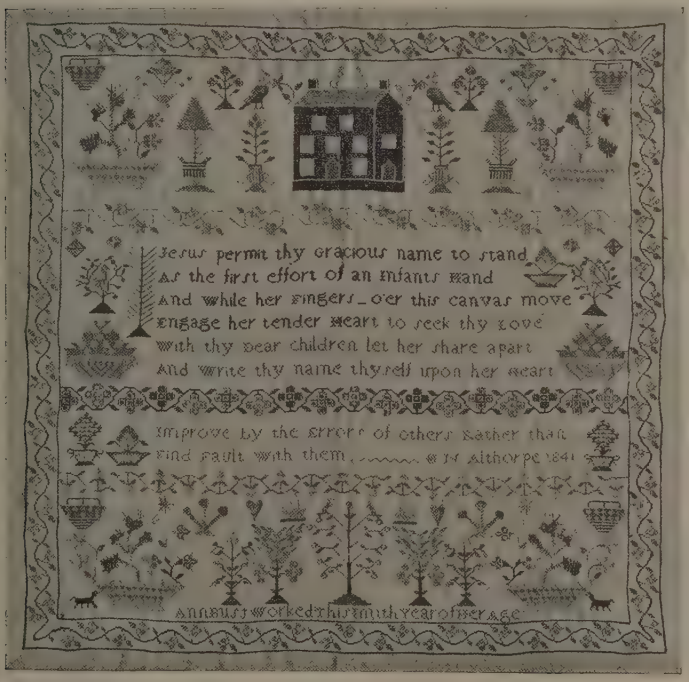
HELSTON AND ITS "FURRY DANCE." BY NORMAN GARSTIN.

PICTURE to yourself the road to the Derby, but picture it also very attenuated, gravely self-respecting, slightly Methodistical, tempered with a solid agricultural element journeying thither in comfortable carts drawn by broad-hoofed, heavy-pasterned horses smacking of the plough; brakes and Jersey cars, landaus, and the omnipresent bicycle flitting by with resonant gong. Picture these journeying along a hilly road that borders a blue bay, a sunny mist of heat lying over the waters and softening all the landscape, and you will see what those saw who travelled from Penzance to Helston on the Flora day.

St. Michael's Mount is broken up with sun and shadow against the glittering, misty sea; the mount always leaves an uncomfortable sensation of having escaped out of a watercolour drawing before the artist had time to mount it (pun unintentional); in this wise does the commonplace revenge itself upon the ultra-picturesque by slowly sapping your power to believe in its existence—outside of art.

But we must jog on to Helston or the dancing will begin before we get there, so we wind our dusty way up and down long hills, but for the most part upon high, wind-swept, treeless, undulatory highlands, where the gorse is very yellow and sweet in the sunny month of May; past square, uncompromising granite-built cottages that scorn to nestle, but plant themselves out in square gardens and are discreet and respectable, like Charles Lamb's party in a parlour "all silent and all damned"; past gaunt mine chimneys and ruined engine houses, and here and there, peeping out of some crease in the folded land, rises the tower of a parish church.

Down the sides of such a crease Helston stands,


Jesus permit thy gracious name to stand
As the first effort of an infants hand
And while her fingers o'er this canvas move
Engage her tender heart to seek thy love
With thy dear children let her share a part
And write thy name thyself upon her heart
Improve by the errors of others rather than
find fault with them
Ann Buss worked this in the 11th year of her age

THE SAMPLER OF ANN BUSS 1841

A BIT OF HELSTON FROM A PAINTING BY NORMAN GARSTIN

the valley declining toward the sea at the Loe pool, a curious fresh water lake held back from the open water by a natural sand bar. If you came upon Helston on a day that was not market-day you would find a decent town where you would feel certain that life would pass calmly, uneventfully, and withal comfortably, if one might judge by the houses, which possess an old-fashioned air of pleasant well-being. Gardens, green and sunny, may be seen through open doors even in the main street, with quaint overhanging bow windows; even this business thoroughfare—if I may call it so without satire—is sufficient evidence that at Helston at least people have still time to sit and watch their neighbours.

But come to Helston on the Flora or "Furry Day," as it is locally called, and all is changed; from Falmouth, from Hayle, from Redruth, Camborne, Penzance, Truro, the trains and the roads have been pouring in crowds, and the little town is all bustle; flags flaunt their many-coloured nationalities across the street, carriages and carts are driving in from all sides. The footpath is very nearly impassable, what with the booth on one side and the shop on the other, and the slow rustic moving vaguely and uncertainly from side to side; the principal houses and shops have their doors swathed with boughs of evergreens, which serve a double purpose: they help the town to a festival appearance and also show through which doors the dancers are to go. For now it is nearly one o'clock and the gentry are about to begin.

They are assembled in a hall, where the Mayor or some other respected Helstonian marshals the young people who wish to dance, and himself with his partner leads the procession, a band playing the unvarying Flora tune, which rings in your ear throughout the day. These are some quaintly irrelevant words that are popularly jingled with this tune:

> "The whale, the whale of which we sing,
> Is the ocean's pride and the fishes' king."

Likewise these others, which certainly seem more in harmony with the subject:

> "As John Brown was a walking home
> He met Miss Sally the glover,
> He kissed her once, he kissed her twice,
> He kissed her three times over."

Whether Miss Sally's shop was the original one, in which we are told it was *de rigeur* for the dancers to meet and buy their gloves, I cannot say, but perhaps it was only the gentlemen who dealt with Miss Sally.

Out they go, these merry dancers, into the sunshine and into the crowd, which good-humouredly tries to make room for them. They dance in and out of houses and shops, through the rooms and yards, and back again into the street, the men clad in tall silk hats and frock coats, the ladies in what-

ever pleases them, which means every variety of summery garment allowed by fashion. On they go with the band ahead. Sometimes the big drum will not be coerced through some narrow entry, and he stands outside to bear the witticisms of the crowd; the dancers seem warm but determined, and down the street they step it, treading their measure, which is as much like a polka as curb-stones, lamp posts, and a dense crowd will permit. There is also a graceful interchange of partners, which is, however, only temporary, and does not impede the progress of the dance, that for two hours winds in and out of houses and gardens and streets, abating only of the sternness of their purpose to be photographed on a cool lawn, among rhododendrons and lilacs.

Dear me! how strong is custom, and what strange liberties it takes with the proprieties. Tell the well-brought-up young ladies and gentlemen of our day that they would dance at high noon in the face of the sun in heaven and of a large crowd, down the streets of a country town, footing it merrily through the parlours and the shops of the butcher and the baker and the candlestick-maker, led on by the mayor and the band, and they will be shocked and incredulous, but tell them that this has always been done on the eighth of May in Helston, that the age of the custom would sanctify worse things, and they will dance too—silk hats and all.

Time was when this dancing began at six in the morning, when the country lads brought "the may," as they call sycamore sprays, into town and danced with the servant lasses; at one o'clock the gentry roused themselves to a sense of what they owed to an immemorial custom and danced as they do still, and at four the tradespeople took up the burden of usage and frolicked through the town; but to-day the early dance is given up, and, sooth to say, I can pardon the death of a custom that was so terribly early in its habits.

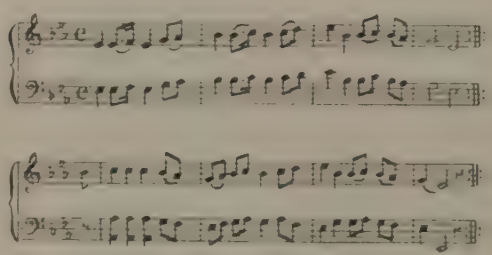
A BIT OF HELSTON FROM A PAINTING BY NORMAN GARSTIN

What it was that has set all these good people dancing down the ages, I do not know, nor does any one else; there is of course a legend of a dragon and a plague; but as every one tells it differently, and neither a dragon nor a plague seems to have much to do with dancing, I am no wiser. The Helstonian explains it by saying that it was always like that, and that is perhaps as far as we can go. May has several joyous customs even down here in Cornwall, where the people are more drawn to the grim and funereal aspects of life—if a funeral can be properly called an aspect of life—than to the frivolous and giddy amusements thereof. At Penzance, for instance, May Day is ushered in by the deep notes of the May horn, whereon all the boys play—most distractingly, be it observed.

At Bodmin there is what is called the "May riding," when some one comes into town on horseback with the "may," and, I believe, holds a court. At Scilly a Queen of May is still chosen from amongst the

THE "FURRY DANCE" AT HELSTON — FROM A PAINTING BY NORMAN GARSTIN

little damsels of the islands, but oddly enough, all these places have traces of Danish inroads and settlements, so, whether these graceful welcomes to sweet spring are indigenous to the soil and to the Celt, or whether they have come in the keels of the Norse pirates, to whom Balder the Beautiful was beloved of all who knew what the long northern winter meant, I cannot tell; but we must be grateful for these customs, no matter whence they come. And now it is time to return by the hilly road round the blue bay, over which the sun is slanting low, while the air is heavy with the scent of the yellow furze.



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